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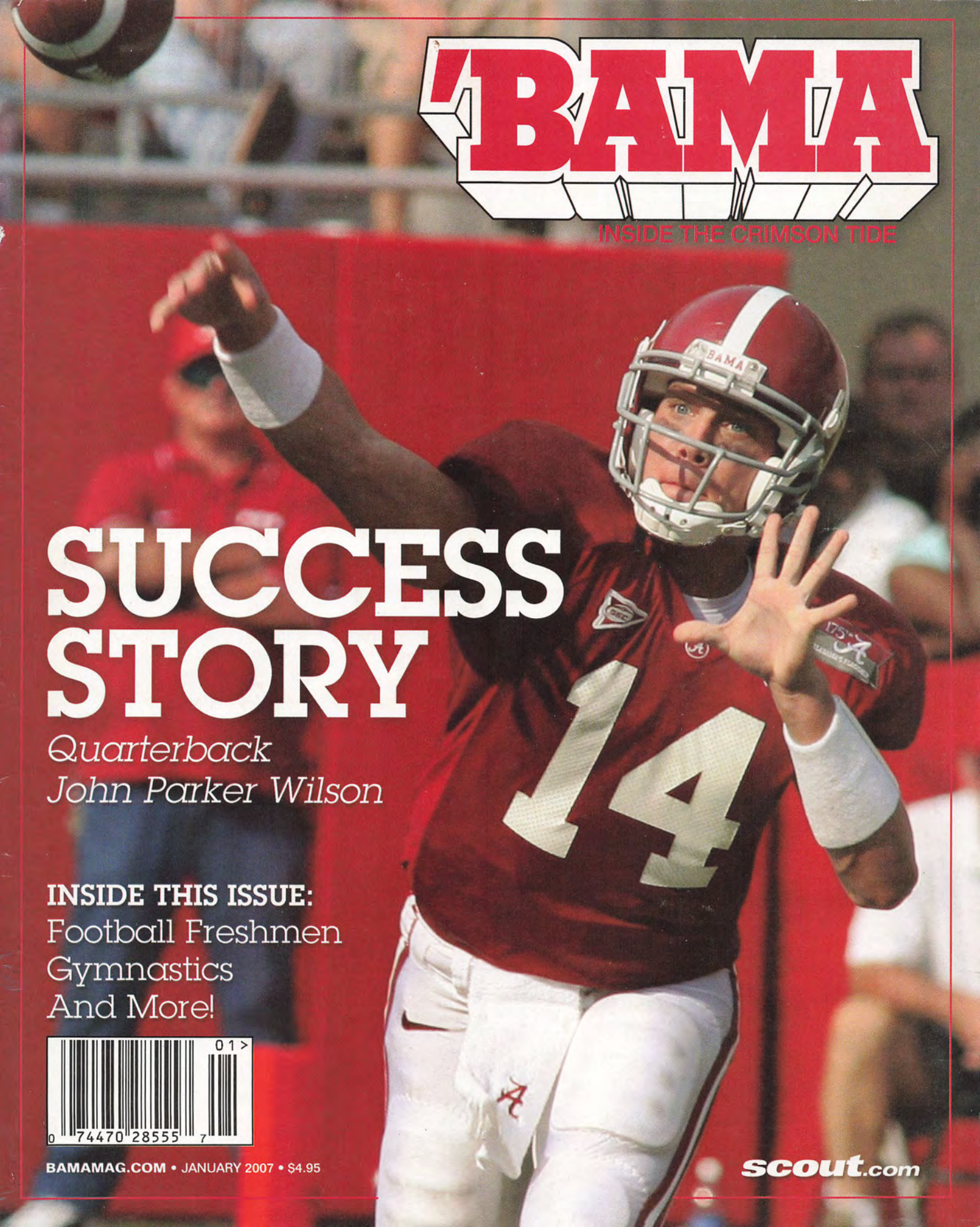
INSIDE THE CRIMSON TIDE



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Dear Fellow Crimson Tide Fans,

This is the season of "Decision Time." Alabama's football coaches are having to make decisions about which prospects are most needed in the upcoming recruiting class. And those prospects are having to decide if they want to spend the next few years as members of the Crimson Tide or as some lesser light.

By the time you read this we will know if a bowl committee made the decision to have the nation's most storied bowl team in its arena for a part of the holidays. For its part, Bama should have had no trouble in deciding whether to accept. While some may feel that the disappointments of some regular season games should extend to some sort of pennance involving declining a bowl invitation, a bowl game serves many purposes. One of them, by the way, is not pecuniary. At the level of bowl for 2006 Bama, it is likely to be a money-losing affair for The University.

While Alabama's team may not have lived up to hopes of the coaches, players and fans, no one could question the heart of the players. And a bowl game is a reward for the players.

Bowl practice is not spring practice, but it's better than no practice. By going to a bowl game, a team gets a few more weeks of time to work on football fundamentals, if that's what the coaching staff wants to use the time for.

And in future seasons, a lower tier bowl game melds into the total. And Alabama has extraordinary totals. Alabama is the national leader in bowl game participation (53 going into this year) and victories (30). The Crimson Tide has played in the four traditional major bowls (Rose, Sugar, Orange and Cotton) and won them all at least twice. There is nothing to be gained by skipping a bowl opportunity and allowing the likes of Southern Cal and Tennessee to edge closer to the Bama records.

It's also decision time on a personal level, and I mean more than just what to buy my wife for Christmas (though that ranks above most bowl games in importance).

This is also the giving season. Most of us have much more than the neediest, and worthwhile charities are everywhere for your consideration. As you make those end-of-year contributions, consider:

• The Crimson Tradition Fund. This is the backbone of the athletics department, the means by which Bama will have all that is necessary to be nationally competitive. Expenses are extraordinary for facilities, coaches and staff, and scholarships. Contributions should be sent to Crimson Tradition Fund, Office of Athletics Development, Box 870343, Tuscaloosa AL 35487. The website is athleticdevelopment@ia.ua.edu.

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• The J.E. Lisby Memorial Scholarship Fund. Jay Lisby was associate editor of 'Bama Magazine and died of cancer at age 48 on June 23, 2004. The University was astounded that in a matter of months his readers raised enough money to endow a scholarship in his name. You can add to that scholarship in the College of Communications to The University of Alabama, c/o Bonnie LaBresh, Box 870172, Tuscaloosa AL 35487 (be sure to include "Lisby Scholarship" on the check).

• The best man in Alabama or any other state may be John Croyle. He is much, much more than, as he says, "Brodie's Daddy." He has been "Daddy" to the dozens and dozens of the most unfortunate among us–unwanted children. He has turned heartbreak into heartwarming as the children of the Big Oak Ranch have opportunities that would never have been possible without the love and nurture of John and Tee Croyle. In order to house, feed, clothe, insure, educate, discipline (yes), and all the other things needed for these boys and girls, the Croyles must raise $15,000 per day. They do not accept government funding because they do not want government interference. Send contributions to Big Oak Ranch, Box 507, Springville AL 35146.

Best wishes for the season. ■

Sincerely,
Kirk McNair

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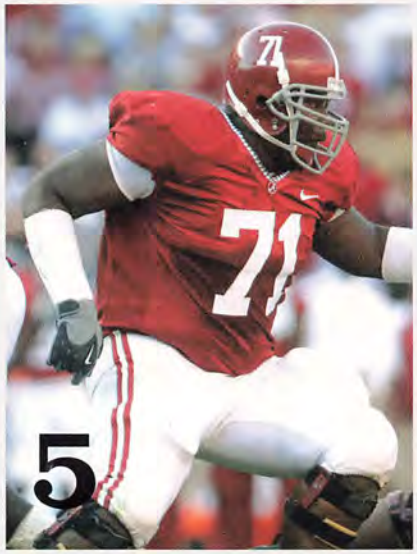

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Cover photo of John Parker Wilson by Kent Gidley
Centerspread photo of John Parker Wilson by Kent Gidley

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To Play Or Not To Play

Mike Shula decides when to redshirt football freshmen

To play or not to play, that is the question for coaches each year when they welcome their prized new recruits onto campus. The axiom that you will lose a game for every freshman you have in the lineup is no longer operable. Ways of thinking evolve, and there's no clearer example than the movement towards true freshmen getting onto the football field at a high rate.

(The adage originally was that for every sophomore played a game would be lost, but that was in the day of freshmen not being eligible.)

It's all a highly speculative endeavor, and no one understands the ramifications better than Alabama Head Coach Mike Shula himself. As a freshman quarterback at Alabama in 1983, Tide Coach Ray Perkins sent Shula in for a handful of snaps–not even enough for Shula to earn a letter for his freshman season. At the time, Perkins was unaware the NCAA was becoming more strict on players in Shula's situation not being allowed to redshirt. Perkins hit the roof when it became clear that Shula had essentially burned a year of eligibility for mop-up work, but to no avail. Shula's football career was over a year too soon.

When a freshman is in on a few inconsequential snaps he basically has wasted a season. On the other hand, if a team is deep into a season when it finally realizes the freshman they were holding out for a redshirt is markedly better than the man above him on the depth chart, then the coach risks losing games by not having the best players on the field.

Tyrone Prothro is a good example. His first action came in the Arkansas game five games into the 2003 season, and from that point on, his playing time grew steadily. He played in nine games, getting 197 snaps as a receiver and return specialist. He had 16 receptions for 191 yards and one touchdown and five kickoff returns for 129 yards, including two for 63 yards against LSU. He closed the season with three catches for 63 yards against Hawaii. He also had three rushes for eight yards. He caught at least one pass in each of the final six games of the season. It's fair to wonder if Prothro might have pushed Bama over the top in its upset bid against Oklahoma in the second game that year, or if he could have done something to prevent Northern Illinois from leaving Bryant-Denny Stadium with a win.

Alabama, starved of talent down to skin and bones thanks to NCAA sanctions, didn't have much choice but to play freshmen in recent years, but that's a different story altogether. Now at Bama there can be legitimate discussion of the option of playing freshmen not out of necessity, but out of privilege. Shula has said 2006 was the first year he felt like he could play freshmen because he wanted to rather than because he had to.

Consider the fact that Alabama's 2006 roster is made up of 46 players who sat out their first year for a redshirt season, and 29 players who saw the field as true freshmen. Alabama's current roster includes 15 freshmen redshirting from the current season, 14 from last year, six from 2004, five from 2003 and six from 2002. This year Alabama played eight true freshmen. Nine members of the current squad played as true freshmen last year, seven in 2004 and five in 2003.

One true freshman playing in 2006 was non-scholarshipped placekicker Leigh Tiffin and another was running back Terry Grant, who later was injured and will in all likelihood receive a medical hardship waiver and will be a redshirt freshman in 2007.

That leaves six freshmen from the 2006 signing class who have had baptism by fire into Southeastern Conference football. Oddly, those six have represented a microcosm of the different decisions coaches must make and the different outcomes each decision produces. Some of those decisions are no-brainers, and others turn out to be errors in judgment.

Andre Smith, the no-brainer, was slotted for playing time at left tackle as soon as he inked with Alabama. It takes not only athleticism and skill to protect the quarterback's blind side in the SEC, but dedication and intelligence. Smith was the rare combination of all those ingredients. No one wanted to burden the big guy with the weight of expectations that he come in at one of the hardest-to-play positions in football, but it was pretty clear he was going to be the guy from the moment he stepped onto the practice field.

"For all of us it was probably about the third day of practice," Shula said, "and we probably kind of delayed it two days or a day and a half."

He said that Smith was able to start at the critical position "because of his size and strength and athleticism. But he will really learn the position in the spring." Other than quarterbacks, it is likely that the position most likely to have freshmen redshirted is offensive line.

It's worked out well for Alabama and Andre. For that matter, Tide quarterback John Parker Wilson has also been a prime beneficiary.

"Just think of how good he's going to be, how he's gotten better and how good he's going to be next year because of all the experience," Shula said. "The speed that you have to react to those different looks, and to do it with crowd noise and all those types of things, you can't substitute for that."

If Andre is the best-case scenario for all the benefits playing a freshman can bring, receiver Mike McCoy is the example of the worst-case scenario. McCoy came into another position where Alabama was reeling from injuries and defections the spring prior. Keith Brown and DJ Hall were entrenched, but behind them was a foundering bunch, injured and/or lacking in experience or performance. Shula eyed the receiver position as one where a freshman could come in and learn quickly. It is certainly easier to pick up than left tackle. McCoy drove over from his home in Mississippi to get early work with his future teammates, learning the routes and

working on his timing with Wilson in passing skeleton drills in the summer at the football complex. He looked good enough in fall practice to get into the season opener against Hawaii, where he played two plays. Seven games went by before McCoy ever saw the field again, and that was only for one play against Tennessee. He got a handful of snaps against Florida International a week later on homecoming.

"That's kind of been tough," Shula said. "I think all of us may think of it differently if they rules continue to stay the same with the clock next year. I think everyone would agree there's a lot fewer opportunities."

The most newsworthy note out of McCoy's freshman year was a bite in the butt he took from the Vols' mascot hound dog, Smokey, in pre-game warm-ups. Had he been designated for a redshirt he wouldn't have been on the trip and subjected to Smokey's fangs. (It could have been worse, Shula pointed out later. He noted that Bama's lockerroom was near the cage of Mike, the LSU's mascot, which is a tiger.)

What if the Alabama staff had been a little more conservative in their expectations of Mike McCoy? Down the road there will be no shortage of those who will wish he could hang around for another year.

There have been other tough calls to make on the redshirt front this year. Javier Arenas was signed in large part for his abilities as a kick return specialist. He has been Alabama's primary kick and punt return man this year, but some might question burning the 'shirt just for special teams.

"We see value now and I think we'll see even more value next year," Shula said. There's "no doubt" Arenas' experience returning kicks as a freshman will help him as he adds duties as a cornerback next season and down the road, Shula said. "The experience in playing in these crazy stadiums front of these 80-90,000 fans– there is no scrimmage, there is no spring game that can substitute for that stuff."

Despite his own experience, or perhaps because of it, Shula has erred on the side of putting a freshman on the field if he feels he might be able to contribute. The only borderline freshman that ended up taking a redshirt was receiver Earl Alexander. Alexander was athletic enough for a position swap from quarterback to wide receiver, and that change was indeed made to give Alabama better numbers at receiver. Shula had been impressed with Alexander's work as he has made the adjustment, but decided against playing him early in the season.

Running back Terry Grant was likely

Andre Smith starred as Tide freshman

University of Alabama

2006 Freshmen:

Played (8):
Javier Arenas
Andre Smith
Justin Woodall
Sam Burnthall
Mike McCoy
Terry Grant (medical RS)
Marquis Johnson
Leigh Tiffin

Redshirting (15) :
Terry Grant
Earl Alexander
Milton Talbert
Charlie Kirshman
Charlie Higgenbotham
David Ross
Taylor Pharr
Cole Harvey
Andy Davis
Tremayne Coger
Bryan Motley
Alex Stadler
Preston Dial
Jake Jones
Greg McElroy
Travis Sikes

penciled in for a redshirt year before the Tide's first fall scrimmage, then he turned in one of the most electrifying first scrimmages a freshman ever had and things quickly changed. Grant had two phenomenal touchdown runs of 45-plus yards against Bama's first defense, and it became clear that Grant was closer to being ready to play in the SEC than anyone had expected. The next day he was another young return man for the Crimson Tide, and a possibility to enter the mix at running back. Grant played in three games (a total of 30 plays) for Alabama before an ankle injury forced him out for the rest of the season. Thanks to the rules for a medical hardship waiver (medical redshirt), Grant will be a redshirt freshman next season anyway.

"I think there are a lot of reasons to play them," Shula said.

The philosophy that special teams play can add value to the team now while also preparing the individual for expanded roles in the future has applied to freshmen Justin Woodall, Marquis Johnson and Sam Burnthall. Each has played regularly on special teams and in a very limited capacity on defense.

If there's anything Shula might kick himself for in regards to playing youngsters is not getting them enough experience their first year.

"Like John Parker Wilson," Shula said. "If we could have played him more last year think of how much that could have helped him. He's done a nice job now as a true sophomore with very limited reps his first year."

Maybe Shula made that comment peeking ahead to next season. Alabama verbal commit Robert Marve, from Tampa, Florida, appears to have all the physical tools to step right in at the next level and compete with the current quarterbacks for playing time. If he comes in and beats out the current reserves for the backup spot to John Parker Wilson, and is able to get significant playing time early in ballgames where his presence might make the difference, it would all of a sudden make Alabama's quarterbacking options a lot more plentiful. ■

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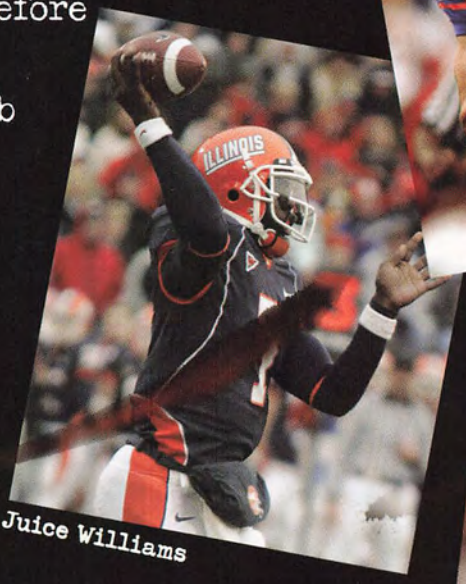
Thrown Into The Fire

More and more true freshmen are impacting college football than ever before

by Matt Herb
SCOUT.COM

Tim Tebow


Juice Williams

Mitch Mustain

PHOTOS: Tebow (Marc Serota/Getty), Williams (Scott Boehm/Getty), Mustain (Brian Bahr/Getty)

When Al Golden was a freshman at Penn State in 1987, his coach liked to pretend he didn't exist.

It was nothing personal. Back then, Joe Paterno liked to pretend that none of his freshmen existed. He opposed freshman eligibility, and so first-year players became what George Orwell once referred to as "unpersons." They did not appear in the media guide and were not to be spoken of publicly. When reporters inquired, Paterno would admonish them. "Golden?" he would sneer. "Who's he?"

The young tight end did finally re-emerge after a year of scout-team exile. He has gone on to become a Division I-A coach, the latest to try his hand at reviving Temple. Although he got his introduction to the profession at Penn State, where he became an assistant coach after enjoying a fine playing career, he probably never entertained thoughts of imposing Paterno's blanket gag order on the Owls. How could he? It would be difficult to utter a sentence about Temple football these days without mentioning a freshman or twelve.

You think that's an exaggeration? Think again. In 2006, his first season in Philadelphia, Golden has played 20 members of his recruiting class. Starting quarterback Vaughn Charlton was a true freshman, as was tight end Marcus Brown, defensive tackle Andre Neblett and outside linebacker Junior Galette. Eleven other freshmen appeared on the two-deep depth chart and nine started. No team in Division I-A used more first-year players.

Temple's reliance on true freshmen reflected a new coach's understandable desire to break with the past. But the quick ascension of Golden's initial recruiting class reflected something else --- a newfound disdain among college coaches for the time-honored practice of redshirting. Coaches nowadays are rushing to get talented players on the field as quickly as possible rather than putting them through a season of dues-paying drudgery. More and more, those players are having an impact.

"I think the paradigm has shifted a little bit," Golden said. "When I attended college at Penn State, there were maybe two or three kids who played and that was it. They redshirted nearly everybody. But with the 85-scholarship limitation, more kids are needed to play."

Temple isn't alone in embracing the potential of its newest arrivals. Florida State has played 17 of its most recent recruits in 2006, more than any Atlantic Coast Conference school. Illinois has used 17, the most in the Big Ten, while Mississippi (17), Florida (15) and Kentucky (13) have played the majority of their 2006 signing classes.

Ronald Martinez/Getty

Did Missouri err in using Chase Daniel as Brad Smith's primary backup last season? Considering that Daniel rallied the Tigers to a 27-24 overtime victory over Iowa State, setting the stage for a breakthrough sophomore season, probably not.

In Gainesville, coveted recruit Tim Tebow complemented starting Gator quarterback Chris Leak, attempting few passes but ranking second on the team in rushing. In so doing, he added to a growing body of evidence that suggests freshmen can be entrusted with some of the game's most demanding positions.

Did Missouri err in using Chase Daniel as Brad Smith's primary backup last season? Considering that Daniel rallied the Tigers to a 27-24 overtime victory over Iowa State, setting the stage for a breakthrough sophomore season, probably not. Nor has anyone second-guessed West Virginia coach Rich Rodriguez for playing Steve Slaton as a rookie. All Slaton did in 2005 was win the starting tailback position and rush for 1,128 yards and 19 touchdowns. And don't forget Adrian Peterson's performance as a rookie running back at Oklahoma. The nation's top recruit in 2004, Peterson rushed for 1,925 yards and finished second in the Heisman Trophy balloting, the highest finish ever by a freshman.

In the wake of those triumphs, a new consensus is emerging as coaches try to figure out what to do with their most potent recruits. It goes something like this: Why wait?

"If they're talented, and you go to all this effort to recruit them, they really don't improve the team until they're on the field," Kansas State coach Ron Prince said. "There are some growing pains, but we've taken the approach that when they're ready, we're ready."

The Wildcats were more than ready in 2006. Starting quarterback Josh Freeman and tailback Leon Patton are both true freshmen, as are three other members of the Kansas State two-deep.

Freeman quickly established himself as one of the Big 12's most exciting young players. In his first career start, he led the Wildcats to a 31-27 comeback victory over Oklahoma State, completing 10-of-15 passes for 177 yards and rushing 21 yards for the winning score in the fourth quarter.

It was once uncommon for true freshmen to start at quarterback, but the preconceptions that forced such players to endure long apprenticeships are starting to fade.

That's due in part to the indoctrination that prep quarterbacks receive. Years ago, high school coaches sought to keep things simple. There wasn't enough time or talent to attempt anything grandiose. Great athletes often moved on to basketball, track and baseball after football season ended, leaving them little time to pore over the playbook.

These days, top athletes are increasingly focused entirely on football. They prepare for the sport year-round, and that dedication, coupled with the proliferation of organized spring football in the Southeast, has given them a chance to refine their skills to a degree that previous generations could never have imagined. Said Prince, "I don't know that there were programs in 1988 when I came out [of high school] that were throwing the ball as extensively as they are now and are as well coached in the fundamentals. There are so many things that have improved technique-wise and scheme-wise."

A young quarterback prospect today might find that the offense he's playing in college is just a sophisticated version of the one in which he shined as a high school star.

Daniel is a perfect example. Playing for former Texas quarterback Todd Dodge, he threw for 8,298 yards and 91 touchdowns in two seasons as a starter at Carroll High in Southlake, Texas. When he arrived at Missouri in 2005, he impressed his new coaches by displaying an affinity for the Tigers' system. Even when he was working with the fourth team, he made plays in practice. By the end of his first preseason camp, the coaches had

"If they're talented, and you go to all this effort to recruit them, they really don't improve the team until they're on the field. There are some growing pains, but we've taken the approach that when they're ready, we're ready."

Kansas State coach Ron Prince

scrapped their plans to hold him out as a freshman. The sophisticated high school tutelage had paid off.

"Coach Dodge did a phenomenal job of preparing him to be a college quarterback," said David Yost, Missouri's quarterbacks coach and recruiting coordinator. "He came in as prepared to be a college quarterback as any incoming freshman could be. He played an offense that was very similar to ours. He had a lot of the same reads and progressions. He was very, very prepared to step in."

Quarterbacks everywhere are reaping similar benefits. All told, seven Division I-A schools started a true freshman at quarterback this season. They included Temple and Kansas State, as well as Arkansas (Mitch Mustain), Illinois (Juice Williams), Duke (Thaddeus Lewis), Utah State (Riley Nelson) and Ball State (Nate Davis).

The success freshman quarterbacks have enjoyed speaks to more than just their understanding of the game; it's also proof that they are able to handle the pressure associated with the sport's most visible position.

Things have changed since Penn State was muzzling its rookies. Paterno's conviction that freshmen should be neither seen nor heard stemmed from a belief that newcomers weren't accustomed to the stress of playing before big crowds and TV cameras and needed to be protected from the media hordes.

These days, the hordes don't wait for players to arrive on campus before reporting on their every move. The growth of the Web has given rise to a 24/7 media culture with recruiting at its center. Top prospects receive heavy scrutiny long before they sign their letters of intent. And their media-savvy nature has changed the way schools handle them, even schools like Penn State. When consensus All-America recruits Derrick Williams and Justin King signed with the Nittany Lions in February 2005, Paterno didn't hide them away in an undisclosed bunker; he took them to speaking engagements in Pennsylvania to drum up interest in the Lions' upcoming season. The players' youth didn't bother him as much as it might have earlier in his career.

"They are both very mature kids who are not unexposed to pressure," he said at the time. "They had a lot of people interested in them in high school. With the recruiting situation, there are a lot of media people getting involved in it. So they have had a lot of experience dealing with that part of it."

Other coaches have seen the same phenomenon in their programs. On the field and off, certain kids just seem different.

"More than athletic ability, it [has to do with] a maturity level," Missouri's Gary Pinkel said. "Are they mature enough to get into this kind of an environment and play in front of 65,000 people and be on TV and handle that? That takes a rare player. But you do see more of it. And I think maybe because we're seeing freshmen making more contributions now, everybody has their eyes open. They're looking for players they think fit in."

Coaches have other reasons for employing more freshmen. For one thing, the newcomers aren't as inexperienced as they once were. Many choose to accelerate their high school class schedules in order to graduate early and enroll in college in time to take part in spring practice. Tebow and Freeman did that at their schools. Williams and King did the same at Penn State in hopes of jump starting their college careers. Says King, "My redshirt year was in January."

Moreover, many coaches are putting more emphasis on special teams with the disparity between talent-rich and talent-poor programs having steadily shrunk with the imposition of the 85-scholarship cap. Many believe it's worthwhile to use a talented player right away, even if he only plays on kicking units.

"It's one-third of the football game," Golden said. "I know, it always has been, but there's competition now in that one-third. People are game-planning and scheming against each other. If freshmen can [help] you, a lot of coaches think it's worth it. Two decades ago, or even a decade ago, that maybe was not the case."

Players are also more physically mature than they once were. The knock on freshman linemen used to be that they weren't strong enough to do battle with upperclassmen. Most were redshirted and immediately dispatched to the weight room.

But the linemen who arrive on campus these days are bigger and stronger than their predecessors. Prince has seen their growth first-hand. He was offensive line coach at Virginia before succeeding Bill Snyder at Kansas State this past season and has stationed a number of true freshmen on the line the past two years.

"Young people are as dedicated to weight training as they've ever been, as evidenced by the popularity of many of these scouting combines," he said. "There's the Nike combine, and all the other shoe companies have them. Kids are training so that they can perform well at these things. The players come in with more preparation than maybe they did twenty years ago."

Still, there's a stigma associated with playing too many freshmen. When a coach uses a dozen or more rookies, it's often a sign of trouble. Maybe the previous coach didn't leave any talent behind when he was fired. Maybe the new coach is determined to get his guys on the field, pronto. Maybe everybody's hurt.

It's especially noteworthy when

established programs start playing rookies en masse. Take Florida State. In the first seven weeks of the 2006 season, the Seminoles used the majority of their true freshmen, a list headed by safety Myron Rolle.

Rolle, a consensus prep All-America in 2005, was one of four true freshmen to start on defense for Florida State in its game at Boston College. The depth chart Bobby Bowden assembled going into that game was one of the youngest in his 31 seasons with the Seminoles.

Rolle's presence in the starting lineup, along with that of several classmates, didn't faze the veteran coach. "People win with freshmen," Bowden enthused. "You also get beat with freshmen, but [this class] is going to be good."

Maybe so, but the Seminoles didn't overhaul their depth chart just for the fun of it. Bowden was forced to rely on the newcomers when injuries hit his defense.

As it turned out, the Boston College game illustrated the value of experience. The Seminoles lost, 24-19, and spent the last month of their season in the unfamiliar position of having to strive for bowl eligibility.

It's no wonder, then, that coaches don't look to freshmen as a panacea.

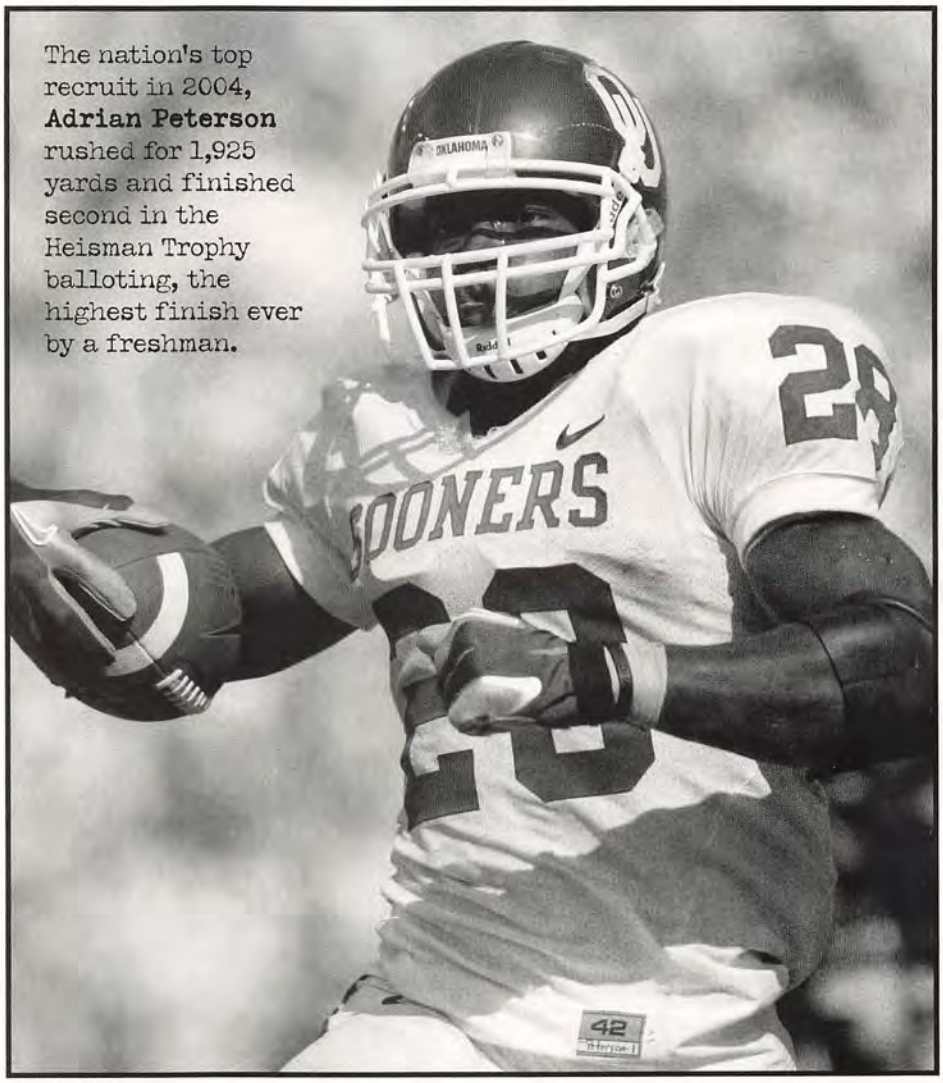
"I don't see Texas or USC playing that many freshmen at this point," Florida's Urban Meyer said. "I've watched them recruit the last four or five years and there's a lot of continuity."

Meyer is hoping the Gators can re-establish their continuity after a few years of upheaval. Earlier this year, the second-year coach guessed that he would end up playing 15 true freshmen. As it turned out, he was off by two; Florida played 13 freshmen in the regular season. And even that was more than Meyer would have liked. "You should play five or six premier players and get them involved," he said.

But Bowden was right: You can win with true freshmen. In 2005, Penn State went 11-1, in large part because Williams and King filled the team's glaring need for speed on the edge.

Williams had one of the biggest plays of the season, a 36-yard touchdown catch with 51 seconds left that rallied Penn State past Northwestern, 34-29. There's no underestimating the significance of that play. It was a thunderclap that awoke the program after two losing seasons. Had they lost their Big Ten opener to the unranked Wildcats, the Lions might well have skidded back into a netherworld of ESPN Plus appearances and December bowl invitations. But they didn't, and Williams was largely responsible for their revival.

Should it come as a surprise that in its hour of need, a rookie stepped forward with authority at what was once, arguably, the most freshman-phobic school in the country? Not at all. That's the way it is with kids today. They just don't know how to keep quiet. ■

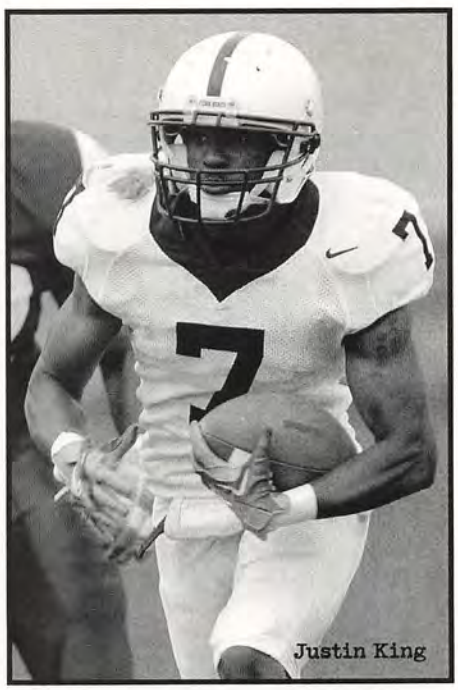


The nation's top recruit in 2004, **Adrian Peterson** rushed for 1,925 yards and finished second in the Heisman Trophy balloting, the highest finish ever by a freshman.

Jonathan Ferrey/Getty

Derrick Williams

Doug Pensinger/Getty



Justin King

Brian Bahr/Getty

PREP PROSPECTS

Crunch time for getting new football talent

Ever since 2006 Football Signing Day, there has been attention on the Signing Class of 2007, scheduled for Wednesday, February 7. At every football college in America the coaches have been assessing needs and possible solutions, then following up with recruiting.

The two-way street has prospects examining their opportunities. First of all, being good enough on the football field and in the classroom to earn a scholarship offer, then being able to make a selection that fits for the player.

Just as coaches need prospects to fill certain needs, players generally want to go where they are needed. And needed as quickly as possible. In a manner of speaking, playing time is the key issue on both sides.

But there are other factors, as has often been pointed out. Geography is a primary reason a prospect picks a school. A player in Birmingham might be enticed by Boise State, but if he wants his family to see him play more than on an occasional Thursday night television game, he might want to consider a school closer to home.

Scout.com

Television appearances, stadium size, practice facilities, living and dining arrangements, and dozens and dozens of factors go into each decision.

And that doesn't even include the "I've always been a fan of..." part of the puzzle.

Miami might have trouble recruiting because of its on- and off-the-field problems, a highly-publicized brawl in a game and a tragic shooting death of one of its players. While something like a recruiting visit pales in comparison to a fatal gunshot, it must be factored in. And, indeed, it could play a part in what Hoover's Kerry Murphy, a Scout.com four-star defensive tackle from Hoover decides to do. Murphy, the 6-5, 320-pounder who is considered by many to be the top prospect in Alabama, has been a strong Alabama lean since the beginning of his recruitment, but he is also considering Auburn and Miami. The Hurricanes expect an official visit before Murphy makes his decision, but the homicide of a Miami defensive lineman may deter Murphy.

No one knows how Alabama's sub-par season and anticipated coaching changes will impact those who have previously committed to Alabama or who are still considering the Crimson Tide. Early indications in conversations with commitments indicates that most were committed to the school, not to the coaches. But it would be foolish to think that coaches are not an important part of the decision-making process for prospects.

So Alabama has reached crunch time. Some have suspected that Bama would sign fewer than 25 this year since the Crimson Tide has a relatively small senior class. Others believe Alabama will sign at least 25 if Bama can get that many on its "A" list. The sorting can come next summer, when only 85 scholarshipped players and only 25 new scholarshipped players can be in pre-season camp, which begins next August.

So who might be left on the recruiting board as the new year approaches?

Scout.com four-star wide receiver Brandon Gibson is a strong candidate to sign with Alabama in February. The Mobile UMS-Wright product is rated as the top prospect in the state on the offensive side of the ball. Gibson has listed the Crimson Tide as his overall favorite since the beginning of his recruitment. The Bulldogs had much success on the field capturing the region championship in their first year in Class 5A.

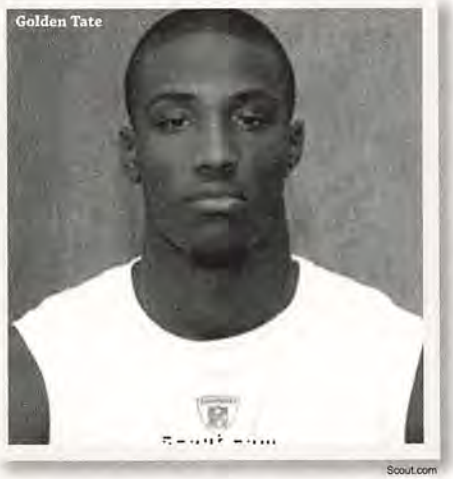
Scout.com four-star safety Michael McNeil from Mobile Davidson made Scout.com All-Southeast and is ranked the number one prospect in the state. McNeil has been consistent throughout his recruitment listing three schools as equal--Alabama, Florida State and Auburn. He planned to take his official visits at the end of his season.

A common thread with all defensive prospects considering Alabama is that Bama Defensive Coordinator Joe Kines is consistently rated as the reason for the strong feelings the

players have for the Crimson Tide. Prospects have recognized that time under Kines means getting solid coaching and the coach getting the most out of the talent.

McNeil's best friend is Sidell Corley from Mobile McGill-Toolen. The Scout.com four-star defensive end gave his verbal pledge to the Florida Gators in early spring. The Corleys have built a great relationship with Kines, calling him their "best recruiting coach." Corley planned to officially visit Alabama, Florida and Auburn.

The position of defensive lineman, and particularly defensive tackle, has to be a recruiting priority for Alabama. Scout.com five-star John Brown (6-1, 280-pounds) lists the Tide among his top two with the Florida Gators. The Lakeland, Florida, native took an unofficial visit to Alabama in the summer.


Golden Tate

Scout.com

He has several teammates already committed to Florida, but do not count out the Tide. Alabama verbal commitment running back Jamar Taylor is Brown's teammate. Taylor is actively recruiting his friend to Tuscaloosa. It's a tough task to pull a prospect from the Sunshine State especially with the recruiting class the Gators are putting together.

Scout.com four-star cornerback James Scott from Daytona Beach (Florida) Seabreeze is one of the more highly sought after defensive backs in the Sunshine State. Scott listed Alabama as his top choice in the spring, but the Tide is now in a dead heat with Florida, LSU, Ohio State and Tennessee. He plans to take an official visit to Tuscaloosa. A great visit could lead to a commitment from one of the nation's elite cover cornerbacks.

Scout.com

Scout.com four-star cornerback Ryan Williams from Mobile B.C. Rain gave his verbal commitment to Auburn before the beginning of his senior season, but has since re-opened his recruitment. His teammate and best friend, Elliott McGaskin, accepted a grayshirt offer from Alabama. The teammates will take all five of their official visits before making a final decision. Williams is rated as 27th best cornerback in the nation by Scout.com.

Probably the number one overall prospect left on Alabama's recruiting board is Scout.com five-star defensive end Allen Bailey from Darien (Georgia) McIntosh Academy. The U.S. Army All-American has narrowed his choices to Alabama, Florida, Georgia and Miami. He doesn't talk much about recruiting as he remains focused on his senior year and his grades. Bailey was in Tuscaloosa during the summer, and he built a good relationship with Kines. Because of his size (6-3, 260), most project Bailey as a defensive end . But Kines recruited Bailey for the middle linebacker position at Alabama. Bailey will not make his college decision until after he takes all his visits.

There are no indications that Alabama will get the hat trick in Mississippi. That is, the Crimson Tide has successfully recruited the Mr. Football of Mississippi the past two recruiting classes (Jimmy Johns in 2005 and Terry Grant in 2006), but is not connected with the top prospects this year.

This year, however, Alabama is recruiting Mr. Football from the state of Tennessee. Scout.com four-star receiver Golden Tate from Hendersonville John Paul II was named Mr. Football as a junior and was the front-runner to receive the award in 2006. Tate is also a top baseball prospect and wants to play both sports in college. The Crimson Tide has offered him that chance, as have Georgia Tech, Vanderbilt and South Carolina. The biggest obstacle to Bama success with Tate is thought to be Notre Dame.

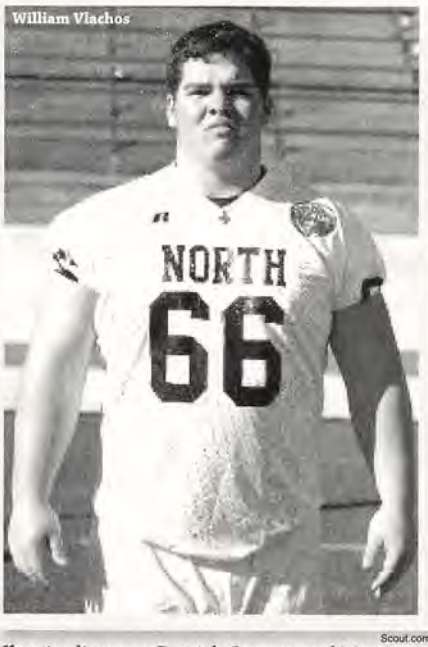
For the past few years Alabama had been hedging its recruiting bets with so-called Grayshirts. The most notable of these has been quarterback John Parker Wilson. A Grayshirt is an unofficial designation for a player who agrees to delay his signing with a school. For instance, a player who agrees to be a Grayshirt with the upcoming signing class would not sign on February 7. Next fall he would enter The University and pay his own way. He would not be a fulltime student, taking fewer than the minimum number of academic hours for that designation. He could not work out with the football team in any form during that semester, but could have access to weight training and conditioning and film work on his own (or in the company of other Grayshirt players). He could not get coaching from the football staff.

If the team qualifies for a bowl game, he could participate in that practice after the completion of fall semester final examinations. And then he could be placed on scholarship for the spring semester and take part in off-season work and spring practice. The next fall he would be a true freshman with five years in which to play four.

Alabama has received three grayshirt verbal commitments, Elliott McGaskin, Hoover

Sidell Corley

Scout.com



William Vlachos

Scout.com

offensive lineman Patrick Crump, and Mountain Brook offensive lineman William Vlachos.

Athens defensive tackle Karlos Jones (6-2, 280) has been offered a grayshirt. Jones is teammates with Tide verbal pledge defensive tackle Alfred McCullough, and they made several trips to Tuscaloosa during the season. Jones lists Alabama as his overall favorite. He will delay his decision to see if any schools come through with a regualr scholarship offer.

Who's out?

Several prospects who listed Alabama as one of their early favorites are now looking in other directions. That is not necessarily a reflection on the Crimson Tide. It could be that Bama did not offer or the favorite team of the prospect did offer. It could be geography or academic opportunities. Or any one of dozens of other factors.

Scout.com four-star offensive tackle Matt Romine from Tulsa (Oklahoma) Union took an unofficial visit to Alabama during the summer. Since the visit Alabama was dropped from his lists of favorites. He has narrowed his choices to Oklahoma, Notre Dame, Michigan and Miami.

Will Blackwell from West Monroe, Louisiana, continues to list Alabama among his top three schools. However, the Scout.com four-star defensive tackle has made it clear his top two schools are LSU and Notre Dame with Alabama a distant third. Blackwell may take an official visit to Alabama, but don't expect him to sign with the Tide.

Auburn verbal commitment Josh Chapman from Hoover, is likely to stick with his commitment to the Tigers. Chapman committed to Auburn after the Tide offered a grayshirt instead of a scholarship. Alabama slightly picked up the recruitment and there were rumors about Bama possibly making an offer of a 2007 scholarship. Chapman unofficially visited Alabama this fall, but has stated his commitment to the Tigers is solid.

Sometimes it's not what you gain, it's what you keep from losing, that is important. And Alabama has some quality commitments it must hold on to.

Ordinarily, geography plays into recruiting more than one might expect. As a result, those prospects from within the state are likely to be more solid in their commitments than those out of Alabama. The Crimson Tide staff did an excellent job in recruiting out-of-state, particularly in Florida.

Scout.com four-star quarterback Robert Marve from Tampa (Florida) Plant committed to Alabama after the Tide offered a scholarship following his performance at the senior mini-camp in Tuscaloosa. Marve had a sensational senior season. He led his team to an undefeated regular season record and has out performed the top Florida gunslingers like five-star John Brantley and four-star Stephen Garcia. Marve faced Garcia in the second to last game of the regular season and was the star of the show. Schools in the Sunshine State are all over Marve now, but he lets them know exactly where he stands with his verbal pledge. His voicemail plays "Yea, Alabama," and has since his commitment.

Alfred McCullough

Scout.com

Current Alabama receivers D.J. Hall and Keith Brown were not heavily recruited by any of the Florida schools until after their commitments to the Tide. The same situation is now with Scout.com four-star Jermaine McKenzie from Bradenton, Florida. McKenzie has Florida State and Miami courting him for his signature. McKenzie considered taking official visits to other schools, but at time of print decided Alabama is the only school that will receive an official visit from him.

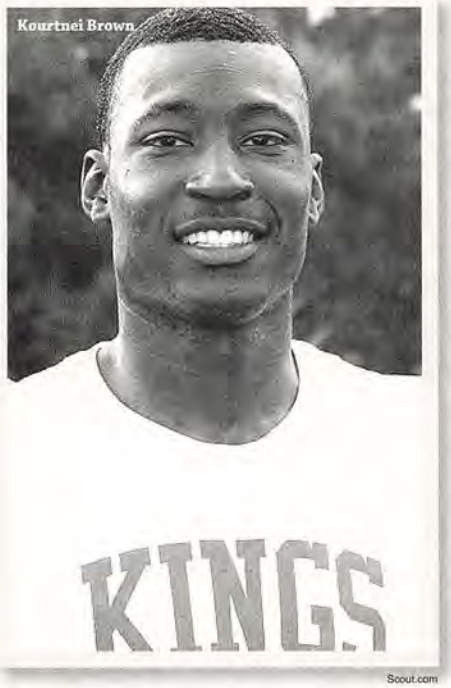
Scout.com three-star defensive end Alex Watkins from Brownsville (Tennessee) Haywood committed to Alabama shortly after he camped in Tuscaloosa during the summer. Watkins had received an offer from Tennessee, but he decided Alabama was the place he wanted to attend and never looked back. He continues to receive strong interest from the Volunteers in hopes of his switching his decision, but Watkins is sold on the Tide and won't make a trip to Knoxville.

Bastop (Louisiana) defensive tackle LaMarcus Williams was offered a scholarship immediately following his summer camp performance. The Scout.com three-star gave his verbal commitment within a few days of his visit to Tuscaloosa. Williams informed his head coach not to give him any recruiting letters he received because his heart was set on playing at Alabama.

Cornerback Sherod Murdock from Tampa Middleton has built a strong relationship with Tide verbal Robert Marve. Murdock and Marve plan to take their official visits together to The Capstone.

Robert Marve

Scout.com



Scout.com three-star safety Chris Lett of Pensacola, Florida, has no plans to visit any school except Alabama. Pensacola Head Coach Mike Bennett has built strong ties with schools across the Southeast by being forthright, and he gives his highest recommendation of his star player.

Defensive end Kourtnei Brown from Victory Christian in Charlotte, North Carolina, was sold on Alabama the day he arrived for the summer camp. He comes from a strong religious family, and with full support of the Brown family, high school coach and minister, Tuscaloosa is the only school Kourtnei will visit. Brown is one of those players who was receiving limited interest from the so-called recruiting experts and by many football schools until he committed to Alabama. After announcing for the Crimson Tide, he began to hear from many other college coaches.

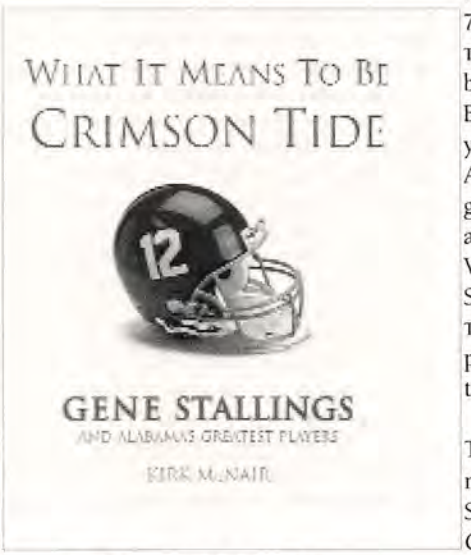
Linebacker Jennings Hester from Atlanta Marist, has never had reservations since his commitment. He has been on campus for a couple of games, and will take an official visit only to Alabama.

The one in-state prospect who considered a visit to another school was Athens defensive tackle Alfred McCullough. The Scout.com three-star has taken several unofficial visits to Alabama this fall and has decided he will only visit the Tide. South Carolina was under consideration for an official visit. ■

What It Means To Be Crimson Tide

Gene Stallings and Alabama's Greatest Players

Alabama football means championships and All-Americans and, for many, memories of a man in a houndstooth hat. Some 60 former Alabama players who performed in Crimson and White over a 75-year period tell us What it means to be Crimson Tide, and many remember Paul "Bear" Bryant. His time as a Bama player, assistant coach, and 25 years as head coach is a major part of Alabama football, but not the only great era. There have also been national championships won under Wallace Wade and Frank Thomas and Gene Stallings. And part of What it means to be Crimson Tide is former Alabama players' expectations of more national titles.



The last coach to lead Alabama to the national championship is Gene Stallings, who played and coached for Coach Bryant before becoming a Hall of Fame caliber coach himself.

Not only have the coaches been legendary but that stellar tradition has spawned players enshrined in the College Football Hall of Fame and the NFL's Pro Football Hall of Fame. Now, Gene Stallings and 'Bama Editor Kirk McNair have collaborated to bring together many of the greatest players ever to wear the Crimson and White to share their memories in What it Means to be Crimson Tide-Gene Stallings and Alabama's greatest players.

Among those sharing their memories are: from the '40s and '50s, Harry Gilmer and Bart Starr; from the '60s and '70s, Lee Roy Jordan, Joe Namath, Ray Perkins, Ken Stabler, Johnny Musso, John Hannah, and Ozzie Newsome; from the '80s and '90s, Mike Shula and Jay Barker. And many more, including those from the new millennium.

Gene Stallings reveals much of his philosophy and also tells the story of how he did *not* become Alabama's head football coach in 1983. Kirk McNair introduces the players.

What it Means to be Crimson Tide-Gene Stallings and Alabama's greatest players is now available. The hardcover book is more than 300 pages in an oversized format with archival photographs throughout. To order your copy ($27.95 plus tax, shipping and handling) call 1-205-345-5074. You may request a personalized autograph from Kirk McNair.

ALABAMA FOOTBALL HOTLIST

As the February 7, 2007, Football Signing Day draws closer (it's closer than you think!), the pace and intensity of recruiting will pick up. While Alabama already has a large number of prospects committed, the work likely will not be done until the final week. Here are some prospects who have been identified with Alabama, although–to be sure–this is not Alabama's official recruiting list. There are some on this list who will not be recruited by Alabama, and there are players not on this list who will be recruited by the Crimson Tide.

Name	Pos	Hgt	Wgt	40-time	Hometown (High School)
Hubert Ayniam	WR	6-0	180	4.5	Garland, Texas (North Garland)
Allen Bailey	DE	6-4	245	4.8	Darien, Ga. (McIntosh Co. Academy)
Ricardo Bates	DB	5-11	170	4.5	Prattville
Jonathan Beasley	LB	6-2	215	4.7	Montgomery (Jeff Davis)
Will Blackwell	DT	6-4	290	N/A	West Monroe, La.
Rickey Booker	LB	6-2	240	4.7	Orlando (Dr. Phillips)
John Brown	DT	6-1	285	N/A	Lakeland, Fla.
*Kortnei Brown	DE	6-5	210	4.6	Charlotte, N.C. (Victory Christian)
Justin Byrd	S	6-2	185	4.6	Chatom (Washington Co)
Nate Carlson	WR	6-3	205	4.56	Birmingham (Briarwood Christian)
Brandon Clear	WR	6-4	206	4.4	Williamsburg, Va. (Jamestown)
Sidell Corley	DE	6-4	250	4.8	Mobile (McGill-Toolen)
Josh Cragin	LB	6-2	215	N/A	Ft Walton Bch, Fla. (Choctawhatchee)
*Patrick Crump	OL	6-3	280	N/A	Birmingham (Hoover)
Jeffrey Daniels	LB	6-2	230	4.8	Brantley
Michael DeJohn	LB	6-0	220	4.7	Birmingham (Hoover)
Sam Edwards	WR	6-2	175	4.55	Pinson (Clay-Chalkville)
Terrell Edwards	RB	6-2	210	4.6	Mobile (UMS Wright)
Mark Fisher	OG-DE	6-4	280	5.3	Madison, Tenn. (Goodpasture)
Stephon Francois	S	6-2	215	4.5	Reserve, La. (E. St. John)
Lydarius Friend	WR	6-4	205	4.6	New Market (Buckhorn)
*Nick Gentry	DT	6-3	270	4.78	Prattville
Chip Ghigna	QB	6-3	204	4.7	Homewood
Brandon Gibson	WR	6-2	190	4.55	Mobile (UMS Wright)
Larry Harris	LB	6-1	190	N/A	Atlanta (McNair)
Corey Hart	S-WR	6-2	203	4.6	Loachapoka
Austin Hayes	OL	6-3	240	5.0	Cedar Bluff
Lionel Henderson	OL	6-4	280	4.94	Mobile (Davidson)
Rashad Henry	CB	5-10	165	4.4	Lumberton, Miss.
*Jennings Hester	LB	6-3	215	4.7	Atlanta (Marist)
Herschel Houston	LB-RB	6-0	220	4.6	Centre (Cherokee Co.)
Darrius Jackson	DT	5-10	224	4.9	Fairfield
Nathan Jew	RB	5-10	193	4.55	Jackson, Miss. (Jackson Academy)
Jamie Jones	LB	6-0	215	N/A	Springdale, Ark.
Dennis King	RB	5-7	175	4.45	Hoover
*Chris Lett	S	6-1	210	4.6	Pensacola, Fla. (Pensacola)
*Robert Marve	QB	6-2	190	4.7	Tampa, Fla. (Plant)
*Rolando McClain	LB	6-4	230	4.68	Decatur
*Alfred McCullough	DT	6-3	297	5.1	Athens
*Elliott McGaskin	S	6-1	190	4.5	Mobile (B.C. Rain)
*Jermaine McKenzie	WR	6-1	179	4.4	Bradenton, Fla. (Bradenton Academy)
Michael McNeil	S-WR	6-2	197	4.5	Mobile (Davidson)
Travis Means	DB	5-10	175	N/A	Mobile (Davidson)
*Sherod Murdock	CB	6-0	175	4.5	Tampa, Fla. (Middleton)
Kerry Murphy	DT	6-4	300	5.1	Birmingham (Hoover)
Darnell Ratcliff	RB	5-11	187	4.5	Chicago (King)
Rico Sharpe	RB	6-0	190	4.5	Trussville (Hewitt-Trussville)
Zack Shaw	WR	6-2	190	4.6	Montgomery (Trinity Presbyterian)
Christian Smith	WR	6-2	210	4.5	Birmingham (Huffman)
E.J. Smith	WR	6-1	185	4.5	Camden, Miss. (Velma Jackson)
Zach Smith	QB	6-2	190	4.5	Blountsville (Susan Moore)
D.J. Stafford	DE	6-3	240	N/A	LaGrange, Ga.
Marquez Strickland	WR	6-2	195	4.55	Opelika
Golden Tate	WR	6-0	180	4.4	Hendersonville, Tenn. (John Paul II)
*Jamar Taylor	RB	5-10	205	4.6	Lakeland, Fla. (Lakeland)
Caleb Thomas	OL	6-3	290	5.4	Decatur
*William Vlachos	OL	6-2	300	5.1	Mountain Brook
Jamison Wadley	DE	6-4	240	4.75	Attallla (Etowah)
Chris Walker	LB	6-2	240	4.6	Memphis (Christian Bros.)
Dallas Walker	QB	6-5	201	4.75	Madison, Miss., (Ridgeland Acad.)
*Alex Watkins	DE	6-4	225	4.6	Brownsville, Tenn. (Haywood)
Terrence Wilkes	RB	5-8	165	4.45	Wadley
*LaMarcus Williams	DT	6-1	285	5.0	Bastrop, La. (Bastrop)
Ryan Williams	CB	5-11	185	4.48	Mobile (B.C. Rain)
K.J. Wright	DE	6-4	210	4.68	Olive Branch, Miss.
Darius Young	WR	6-1	205	N/A	Shannon, Miss.

*Committed to Alabama

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Bowl Talk

A look at the post-season football landscape

Alabama comprises more of college football's bowl history than any other team in the nation, owning the record for most bowl appearances (54) and most bowl victories (30) and an unmatched post-season tradition. NCAA sanctions kept Bama out of a bowl in 2002 and 2003, but the Crimson Tide has been to the Music City Bowl and the Cotton Bowl under Head Coach Mike Shula and split those two games, losing in 2004, 20-16 against Minnesota and on January 1, 2006 beating Texas Tech 13-10.

Alabama's bowl history dates back to the January 1, 1926 Rose Bowl where Coach Wallace Wade's team upset the Waskington Huskies 20-19 to complete The University's first perfect 10-0 season, securing the 1925 national championship, and placing Alabama football on the nation's map.

Alabama has played in all four of college football's traditional major bowl games multiple times. Alabama has gone to the Rose Bowl six times, the Cotton Bowl seven times, the Orange Bowl eight times and the Sugar Bowl 12 times. (The Cotton has since been displaced by the Fiesta Bowl in the top four, but when Alabama played in the Cotton Bowl it was among the Big Four.) Alabama is the only team to have won each of the Big Four at least twice each. Coach Paul W. Bryant's last game was a thrilling Crimson Tide come-from-behind win over Illinois at the Liberty Bowl.

The Southeastern Conference has agreements with eight postseason bowl games following the 2006 season. The winner of the SEC Championship Game will automatically participate in the Bowl Championship Series comprised of the BCS National Championship game, Sugar, Rose, Orange and Fiesta Bowls.

DJ Hall says he will return in 2007.

University of Alabama

The Capital One (2nd), will then make its pick following the BCS selections. The bowl must select the team with the next best overall record or a team that is within one win of the team with the next best overall record.

The Outback, Chick-fil-A and AT&T Cotton Bowls will work with the conference office to determine picks 3-5. The Cotton Bowl has the first preference of teams from the Western Division and the Outback Bowl has first preference of teams from the Eastern Division. The Cotton or Outback can select teams outside of its divisional preference, but must not select them before the opposite bowl selects from its divisional preference. The Chic-fil-A Bowl has the selection of preference following the Cotton and Outback Bowls.

In selections 6-7, the AutoZone Liberty and Gaylord Hotels Music City Bowls will make their selections, not in any specific order, but in consultation with the SEC office. The bowls will rank available qualified teams in order of preference, the team involved in the process would get its preference of which bowl to participate.

The Independence Bowl will receive the eighth selection of available SEC teams.

This season will also mark the debut of the BCS National Championship Game (in name only since Associated Press voters are not bound to recognize the winner of the game as national champions), which will stand apart from the four traditional BCS bowls but will be hosted by each of the bowls once during a four-year cycle.

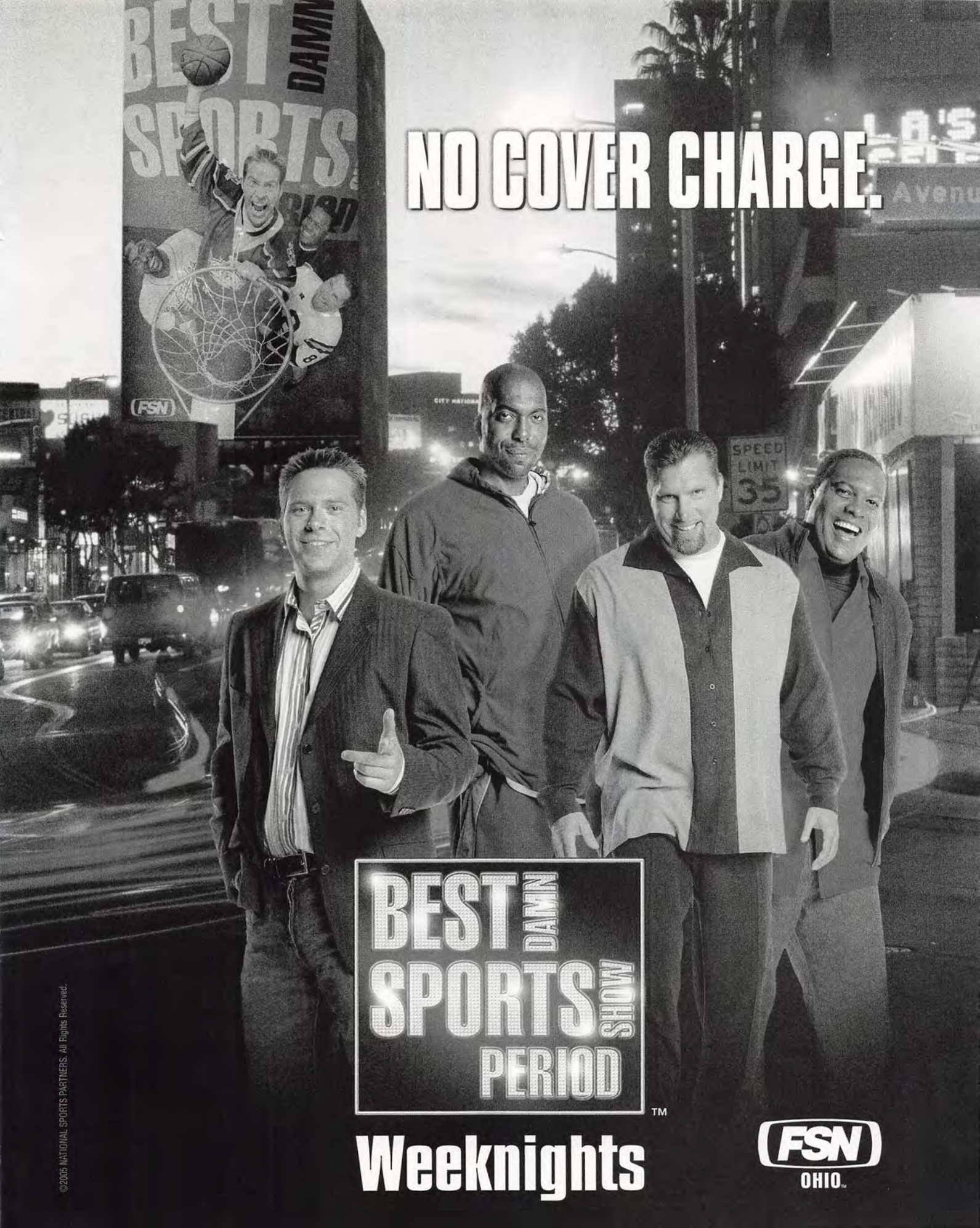
The conference with automatic BCS berths include the Atlantic Coast, Big East, Big Ten, Big 12, Pac-10 and Southeastern Conferences.

FOX Sports will televise all of the Bowl Championship Series games, with the exception of the Rose Bowl, which will be televised by ABC Sports. The Bowl Championship Series purports a guaranteed match-up between college football's top two teams in a true national championship game, but of saying it's so doesn't necessarily make it true.

A Division I-A independent team or champion of Conference USA, Mid-American, Mountain West, Sun Belt or Western Athletic conferences will be guaranteed a slot in one of the five BCS games should that team be ranked 12th or higher in the final BCS standings or if a team is ranked in the top 16 and its ranking is higher than that of a champion from a conference that has an automatic berth in one of the BCS bowls. Should two such teams reach this criteria, the BCS will take the highest ranked team in the final BCS standings.

The BCS uses regional consideration regarding team selection. Specifically, as a member of the BCS, the Rose Bowl will host to Big Ten Pac-10 champions in those years in which either the Rose Bowl does not have the

Continued on Page 22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BUCKLE UP

Continued from Page 18

2006-07 College Football Bowl Game Schedule

Date	Bowl	Time/TV	Conference Affiliation
Dec. 19	Poinsettia (San Diego)	8PM/ESPN2	At-Large vs. Mountain West
Dec. 21	Las Vegas	8PM/ESPN	Mountain West vs. Pac-10
Dec. 22	New Orleans	8PM/ESPN2	C-USA vs. Sunbelt
Dec. 23	New Mexico	4:30PM/ESPN	WAC vs. Mountain West
Dec. 23	Birmingham	1PM/ESPN2	C-USA vs. Big East or MAC
Dec. 23	Armed Forces (Fort Worth, Texas)	8PM/ESPN	C-USA vs. Mountain West
Dec. 24	Hawaii	8PM/ESPN	Hawaii vs. Pac-10
Dec. 26	Motor City (Detroit)	7:30PM/ESPN	Big Ten vs. MAC
Dec. 27	Emerald (San Francisco)	8PM/ESPN	ACC vs. Pac-10
*Dec. 28	Independence (Shreveport, La.)	4:30PM/ESPN	Big 12 vs. SEC
Dec. 28	Holiday (San Diego)	8PM/ESPN	Big 12 vs. Pac-10
Dec. 28	Texas (Houston, Texas)	8PM/NFL Network	Big 12 vs. Big East
*Dec. 29	Music City (Nashville)	1PM/ESPN	ACC vs. SEC
Dec. 29	Sun (El Paso, Texas)	2PM/CBS	Pac-10 vs. Big 12/Big East or Notre Dame
*Dec. 29	Liberty (Memphis)	4:30PM/ESPN	C-USA vs. SEC
Dec. 29	Insight (Phoenix)	7:30/NFL Network	Big 12 vs. Big 10
Dec. 30	Meineke Car Care (Charlotte, NC)	1PM/ESPN	Navy vs. ACC
Dec. 30	Alamo (San Antonio)	4:30 PM/ESPN	Big 12 vs. Big 10
*Dec. 30	Chick fil-A (Atlanta)	8PM/ESPN	SEC vs. ACC
Dec. 31	MPC Computers (Boise, Idaho)	7:30PM/ESPN	ACC vs. WAC
*Jan. 1	Outback (Tampa, Florida)	11AM/ESPN	Big 10 vs. SEC
*Jan. 1	Cotton (Dallas)	11:30AM/FOX	Big 12 vs. SEC
Jan. 1	Gator (Jacksonville, Florida)	1PM/CBS	ACC vs. Big 12/Big East or Notre Dame
*Jan. 1	Capital One (Orlando, Florida)	1PM/ABC	SEC vs. Big 10
Jan. 1	Rose (Pasadena, California)	5PM/ABC	BCS vs. BCS
Jan. 1	Fiesta (Phoenix)	8:30PM/FOX	BCS vs. BCS
Jan. 2	Orange (Miami, Florida)	8PM/FOX	BCS vs. BCS
*Jan. 3	Sugar (New Orleans)	8PM/FOX	BCS vs. BCS
Jan. 6	International (Toronto, Ontario)	12n/ESPN2	MAC vs. Big East
Jan. 7	GMAC (Mobile, Alabama)	8PM/ESPN	MAC vs. C-USA
Jan. 8	BCS National Championship (Glendale, Arizona)	8PM/FOX	BCS #1 vs. BCS #2

* Southeastern Conference Bowl tie-in

(All times Eastern)

national championship game or the Big Ten and Pac-10 champion is not ranked No. 1 or No. 2. Other regional consideration tie-ins include the SEC champion in the Sugar Bowl, the ACC champion in the Orange Bowl and the Big 12 champion in the Fiesta Bowl.

There are also special "bowls" following the college football season. Specifically, games such as the Senior Bowl in Mobile in which players completing their senior college seasons are selected for all-star competition. This is more than just an honor. Seniors would like to continue their careers in the professional ranks, and these all-star games are places to be seen by NFL coaches and scouts.

Alabama has some seniors who should get an opportunity to participate. Among those reasonably hoping for a professional opportunity would be halfback Kenneth Darby, fullback LéRon McClain, fullback/halfback Tim Castille, defensive tackles Jeremy Clark and Dominic Lee, linebacker Juwan Simpson, cornerback Ramzee Robinson, and strong safety Jeffrey Dukes.

Most of Alabama's top players are expected to return for future Crimson Tide play. That includes wide receivers DJ Hall and Keith Brown, among the most outstanding wide receiver tandems in college football. The upcoming seniors have both said they will return in 2007.

Bama's best offensive lineman, center Antoine Caldwell, will be back for another all-star year or two. On defense, end Bobby Greenwood, linebacker Prince Hall and cornerback Simeon Castille are returnees to be excited about. ■

Simeon Castille was a defensive standout in 2006.

University of Alabama

New Hall Of Famers

Five former Tiders chosen for ASHOF

There are some things not right about the Alabama Sports Hall of Fame. Can you imagine that this state still doesn't have former Alabama star running back Ed Salem enshrined, while run-of-the-mill players from other schools get in to keep things balanced?

But on the whole, the ASHOF gets it right. Out-of-state visitors are startled at the sports history of the state of Alabama. Sure, they know about Coach Paul "Bear" Bryant, Joe Namath, Ken Stabler, Gene Stallings, John Hannah, and Derrick Thomas; and maybe about Hank Aaron and Willie Mays. But not many know of former heavyweight champion Joe Louis or track and field legends Jesse Owens and Carl Lewis being native Alabamians.

Indeed, those who live in Alabama are surprised at the depth of the state's sports history when they visit the museum in downtown Birmingham.

Over the last 35 years, the ASHOF has become the benchmark for other sports museums across the country, with over 5,000 sports artifacts displayed in the 33,000 square foot building.

When the 2007 class of inductees is inshrinted on June 3 in Birmingham next year, the honorees will be joining very select company.

Five of the eight members in the 2007 induction class of the Alabama Sports Hall of Fame played at the University of Alabama. The inductees who played for the Tide are: football players Jerry Duncan, Wilbur Jackson, and Barry Krauss, basketball star Buck Johnson; and Al Lary, who played both football and baseball.

Jerry Duncan was a member of two national championship teams and three Southeastern Conference Championship teams while playing tackle for the Tide from 1964-66. He was named All-SEC in 1966. He gained recognition for catching passes in Coach Bryant's famous tackle eligible plays. Duncan played in two Orange Bowls and one Sugar Bowl while at The Capstone. After his playing days he served as a graduate assistant coach at Alabama. He spent 24 years as the sideline reporter for the Alabama Radio Network. Duncan has worked for many years with the Monday Morning Quarterback Club and the Crippled Children Foundation.

Wilbur Jackson signed with Alabama as a split end, he was the first African–American to sign a football scholarship with the Tide. While at The Capstone he earned All-SEC honors as a halfback in 1973 averaging 7.9 yards a carry. He was the ninth overall pick of the 1974 NFL Draft by the San Francisco 49ers. He accumulated 895 yards his rookie season and was named NFC Rookie of the Year. Jackson ended his NFL career with 5,424 combined rushing and receiving yards with two teams, the 49ers and Washington Redskins. He was a member of the Redskins 1982 Super Bowl championship team.

Barry Krauss is remembered by most Bama fans for stopping Penn State running back Mike Guman on fourth-and-one in the 1979 Sugar Bowl, the play that is now celebrated as the "Goal Line Stand." Krauss was named the MVP of that game, the only time in Sugar Bowl history that a lineman has received that honor. He was a three-year letterman for the Tide at linebacker. In 1976 he was voted the Liberty Bowl's Outstanding Defensive Player and game MVP. He led Alabama in tackles in 1977 (91) and was second on the team in 1978 (112). He was a member of the Alabama All-Century team, a 1978 All-America and two-time All-SEC selection (1977 and 78.) Krauss was the sixth overall pick by the Baltimore Colts in the 1979 NFL Draft. Over his 11-year NFL career he was the Colts' team MVP (1984), Dolphins' team MVP (1989), and accumulated over 1,000 tackles.

Buck Johnson played basketball at Alabama from 1983-86. He earned All-SEC honors three consecutive years (1984-86), All-SEC Tournament Team in '85 and '86 and played on four NCAA Tournament teams. He is the Tide's fourth-leading scorer all-time with 1,896 points and ranks eighth on the all-time rebounding list with 933. He was selected in the first round (20th overall selection) in the 1986 NBA Draft by the Houston Rockets. He had an eight-year NBA career with the Rockets and Washington Bullets. He scored 4,617 points and his team made the NBA playoffs five times. Johnson was also an all-star player in Europe.

Al Lary played both baseball and football during his time at The Capstone. He is one of only three players to be named to the All-Century team in both sports. He was named to the All-SEC team for football in 1950. Lary still holds the Alabama record for touchdown receptions in a season with ten, he ranks fourth on the career touchdown receptions list (14), is fifth on the career list for average yards per reception (19.6) and fourth on the single season list for average yards per reception (21.6). On the diamond for the Tide, Lary was 10-3 as a starting pitcher over two seasons (1950 and 51.) He played two seasons in the major leagues with the Chicago Cubs (1954 and '62.) He also spent 12 years playing minor league baseball before he retired in 1964.

The 2007 banquet will be at the Sheraton Birmingham. Ticket information will be available later. ■

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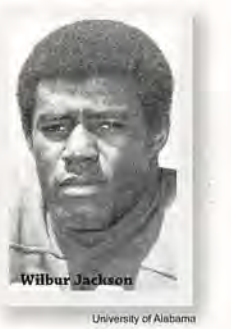
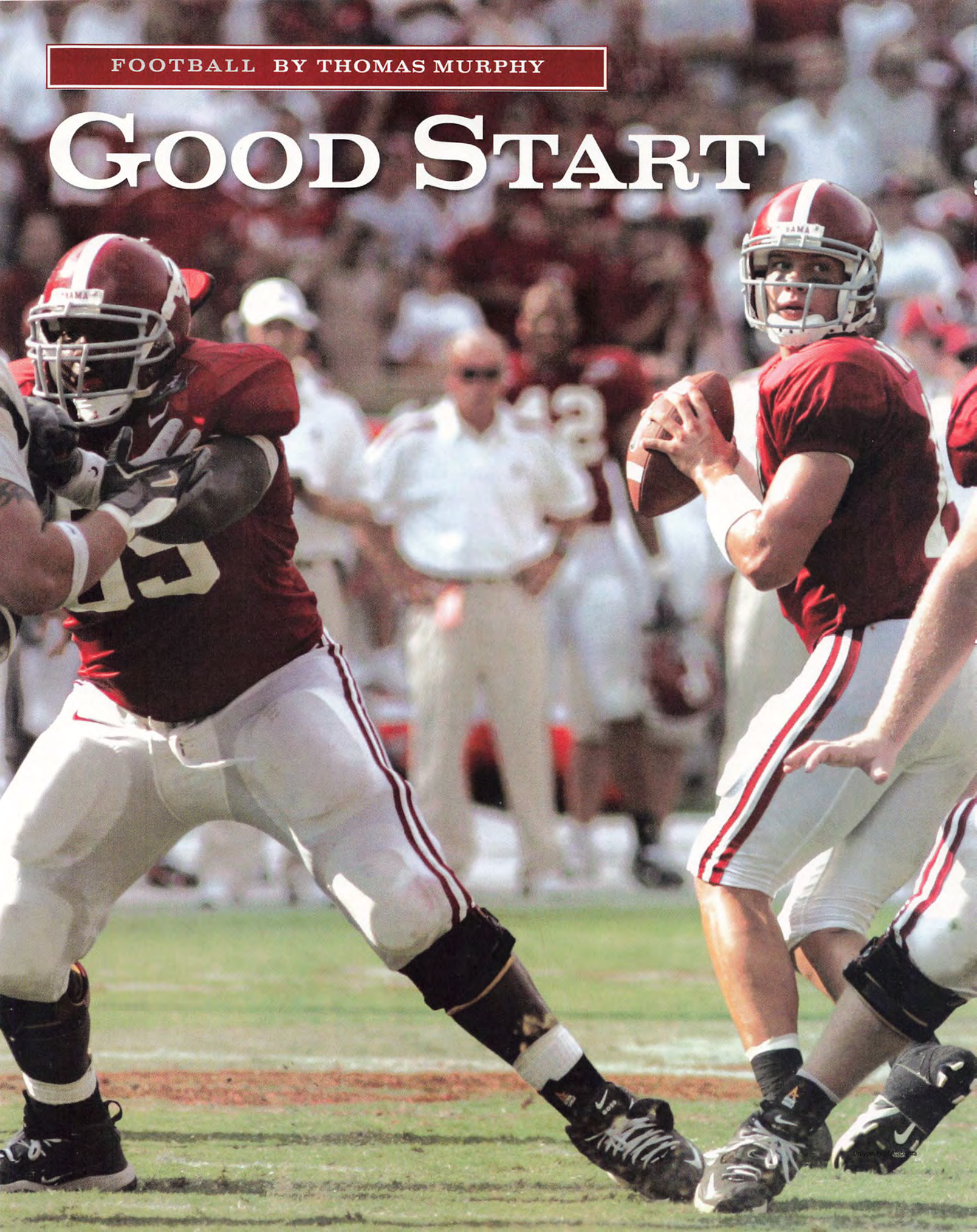


University of Alabama

FOOTBALL BY THOMAS MURPHY

GOOD START



John Parker Wilson exceptional first-year quarterback

Everybody around the Alabama football program knew John Parker Wilson would have to make plays for the Crimson Tide to win games in 2006.

But they also felt the sophomore quarterback out of Hoover High School could go through a lower-profile "breaking in" period in the early going as the Alabama running game set the tempo along with the Crimson Tide's solid defense.

That's where they were mistaken.

Wilson came out of the chute slinging, and Alabama's passing attack was the unexpected pleasure the Crimson Nation could bank on through the first two-thirds of the season.

Stepping into the shoes of record-setting Alabama quarterback Brodie Croyle seemed a daunting task for a first-time starter, but Wilson didn't fall victim to the pressure of the situation. The big right-hander hit 16 of 29 passes for 253 yards in Alabama's season-opening win against Hawaii and then proceeded to throw for at least 200 yards in each of the Crimson Tide's first seven games, despite developing an ankle problem midway through the season.

"He's as good as any I've had," said Alabama Offensive Coordinator and Quarterbacks Coach David Rader, "and I've had two start as rookies (T.J. Rubley and Gus Frerotte) in the NFL, and had one drafted in Brodie.

"He's as good as any of them, and has as many tools as they have. He has all the makings."

That streak of 200-yard passing games established a new school record, and it put Wilson on pace to crack the school's single-season passing yardage mark of 2,499 yards put up by Croyle in 2005. Wilson teamed with receivers DJ Hall and Keith Brown to form a lethal combination with passing and receiving

Marc Serota/Getty

numbers that ranked near the top of the SEC.

"That's one of the most important things in our offense is me being consistent," Wilson said during the midst of his 200-yard passing streak. "Putting us in position to win and not making too many mistakes are the goals."

Wilson was on fire with his veteran receivers through the first seven games of the season, though he cooled off some following an injury to Brown in the Ole Miss game. Of the Crimson Tide's 19 plays of 25 yards or longer through the first seven games, 13 of them were Wilson hookups to Brown and Hall, and five of them went for touchdowns. Two more long plays were Wilson passes to Nikita Stover and LéRon McClain.

Wilson has not been immune to the interception, a standard trait for most first-year starters in the Southeastern Conference. He threw seven interceptions in Alabama's first seven games and also started holding onto the ball longer in an attempt to make big plays as the season wore on.

"If you do eliminate some of those negative plays, then I really do think he's one of the best quarterbacks in the SEC," Alabama Coach Mike Shula said mid-season.

Shula said, "The true measure of a quarterback that I learned a long time ago is the scoreboard. Having said that, for a guy that's come in with–how many reps last year, 30?–to have that much on his shoulders, he's done a nice job. He's going to get better and better. The thing that's so promising about him is the way he works in practice, things don't bother him, he's a natural leader, he communicates well. And he's been productive."

Wilson entered the final two weeks of the regular season with 1,996 passing yards, tied with Jay Barker for seventh place on the single-season chart. Wilson's success came as no surprise to those who saw his work ethic in high school, his commitment during a "grayshirt" season, and his willingness to learn as Croyle's top backup in 2005.

"He prepared really well in the spring and summer," Rader said. "I just had a gut feeling he would play like this.

"I don't know of anybody who loves to play the game more than John Parker."

A two-time state champion quarterback at Hoover High, and the son of a minor league baseball player and an Alabama cheerleader, Wilson seemed groomed for success. But he also had to choose a career path at a younger age than most people.

The Florida Marlins drafted Wilson as an infielder in the 19th round of the 2004 amateur draft. The club eventually threw the lure of a hefty chunk of money his way.

"It was like fifth-round money," Wilson said. "Six figures easy."

Instead of bypassing college and entering the uncertain territory of minor league baseball, Wilson went with his pigskin dreams.

"That was a really tough decision," Wilson said in an interview during fall camp. "I'm not going to lie. I prayed about it a lot. It was really tough. I think I definitely made the right decision. I was glad to come here and play football. I don't look back a day."

Wilson and his parents–Parker and Susan Wilson–agreed that his best course of action was to accept that grayshirt season at Alabama in 2004. While paying for his own schooling that fall–before going on scholarship in January of 2005–Wilson could start learning the college ropes, maturing and watching a savvy veteran like Croyle do his thing. It also allowed Wilson to put another year between himself and Croyle, meaning the starting job could be in his sights as a sophomore.

All that worked to his advantage.

"The grayshirt was our idea all along," Parker Wilson said late last summer. "We wanted that for him. That was our plan and the coaching staff was excited about it."

Wilson spent last summer devoted to pass skel and forming bonds with Brown and the other available receivers. He had already worked into a good groove during spring practices with Hall, who went home to Florida over the summer.

Wilson found Brown six times for 132 yards and a touchdown in the season-opening win against Hawaii while Hall sat out a suspension.

"It's not really surprising at all," Brown said of the advanced passing game. "I think our receivers worked extremely hard with John Parker in the summer and have gotten better."

When Hall got back in the lineup, Wilson quickly got back into lockstep with him and quickly had two major targets.

"I just feel like me and Keith, we connect with J.P. a lot better than people expected we would, seeing that J.P. is only a sophomore and hadn't got that much playing time before," Hall said. (Although John Parker is sometimes known as "J.P." to teammates and others, he and his family prefer no shortcuts.

It's John Parker.)

Early on, Wilson made some heady throws. Against Vanderbilt, he read where a safety wasn't moving over to help on Hall quick enough, so Wilson moved past his original reads and fired a 31-yard touchdown pass to the speedy junior, who had run by a cornerback.

Rader said later it was the first time Wilson had made that throw on that particular play, meaning he adjusted perfectly to the situation.

Wilson has also had to endure some setbacks during his first season under center. His red-zone efficiency is markedly down from his middle-of-the-field production.

"(It is) not good enough," Wilson said. "We're just not getting it done as a whole offense. We've got to execute better down there."

Despite all Wilson's good works in the 2006 season–taking a huge offensive load on his shoulders with the running game at subpar levels–it is that lack of red-zone production the Alabama offense will be best remebered.

"We've really got to change our mentality," Wilson said. "That's what we're talking about is getting down there and knowing we're going to score and not being down there just to be down there."

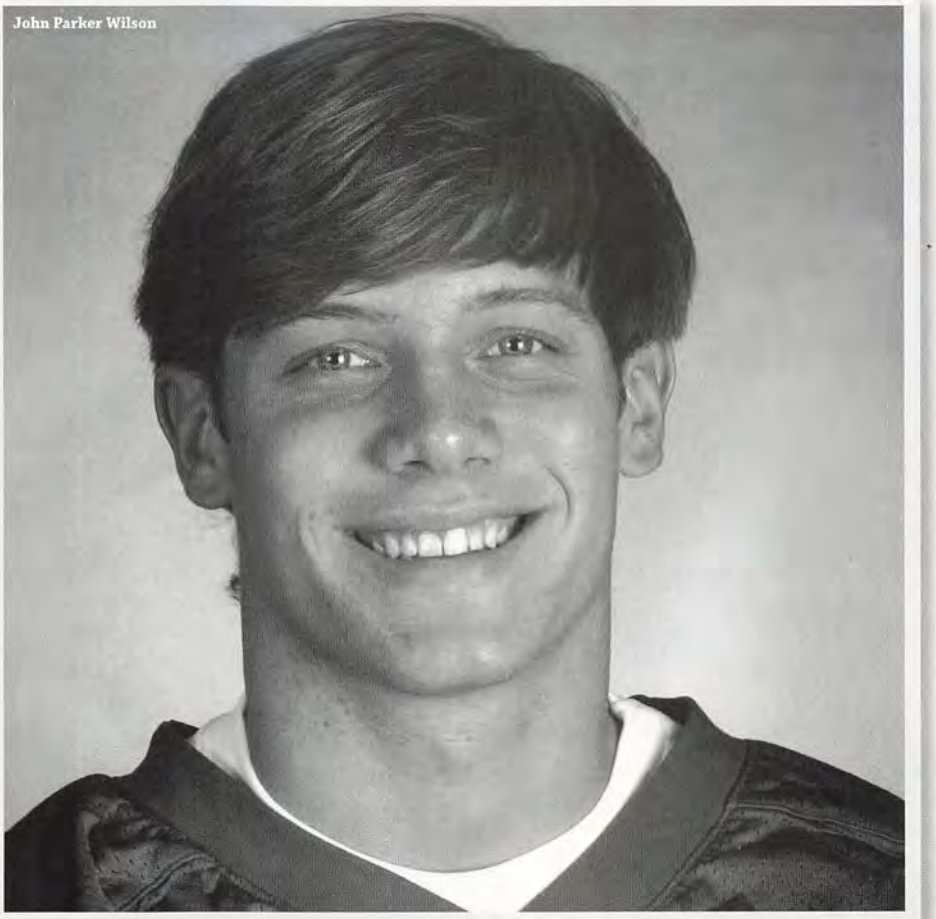
Wilson has something on his immediate predecessor Croyle: better legs. The sophomore's scrambling ability has converted some critical first downs this season, and he's been slam-dunk automatic on the few occasions he's needed to sneak to move the chains.

"I'm kind of more comfortable now," Wilson said. "I know when the clock runs out, you've got to pull it down. Most of the time when they've got stuff covered up, there's a pretty good chance for the quarterback draw up the middle. We've converted a couple of times on that and I feel pretty comfortable with it."

With good health, Wilson should be in line to smash many of the records held by standout Alabama quarterbacks such as Croyle, Shula, Gary Hollingsworth and Scott Hunter.

But it is Jay Barker's status–with 35 victories, the winningest quarterback in school history–that Wilson would most aspire to reach.

"What's important to him is the outcome of the game," Susan Wilson said. "All the attention is just part of the game." ■



John Parker Wilson

University of Alabama

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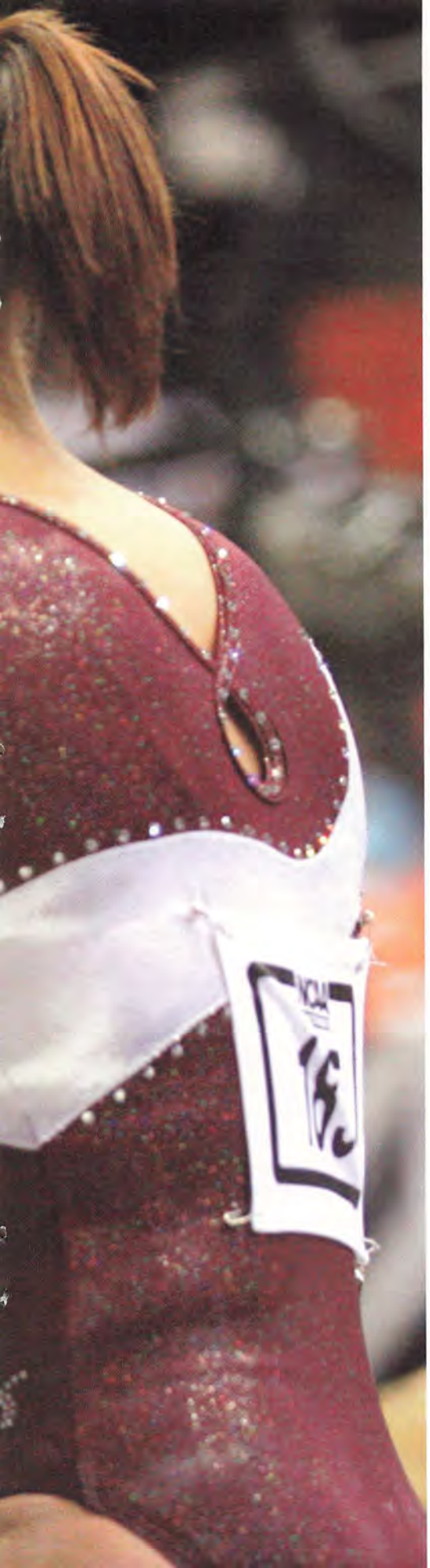
Alabama Coach Sarah Patterson and star gymnast Terin Humph

University of Alabama



GYMNASTICS BY ANDREW VARBLE II

More Than Sport

Pattersons have been even busier than usual

It's already been a busy year for Sarah Patterson and the Alabama Gymnastics team, busier than most. There has been the usual start of school rituals, followed by the start of preseason workouts. All that has been coupled with blending five freshmen, more than a third of the 2007 squad, in with the veterans to find the heartbeat of this year's team.

And this fall, Patterson and company have continued their work in raising both money and awareness in the fight against breast cancer with their "Power of Pink" initiatives. Now in its third year, the "Power of Pink" events benefit Tuscaloosa's DCH Breast Cancer Fund, started by Patterson in 2004. This fall's "A Nite on the Green" and DCH Foundation Golf Classic raised a tremendous amount of money and awareness for the cause.

The "Power of Pink" events continue into the Tide's season when Alabama hosts Auburn for the third-annual "Drive 4 the Cause" meet on Friday, January 26. Both teams will wear pink leotards for the event and a check for the money raised this year for the DCH Breast Cancer Fund will be presented as well. Last year's check was for $90,000 a total Patterson hopes to at least double this year.

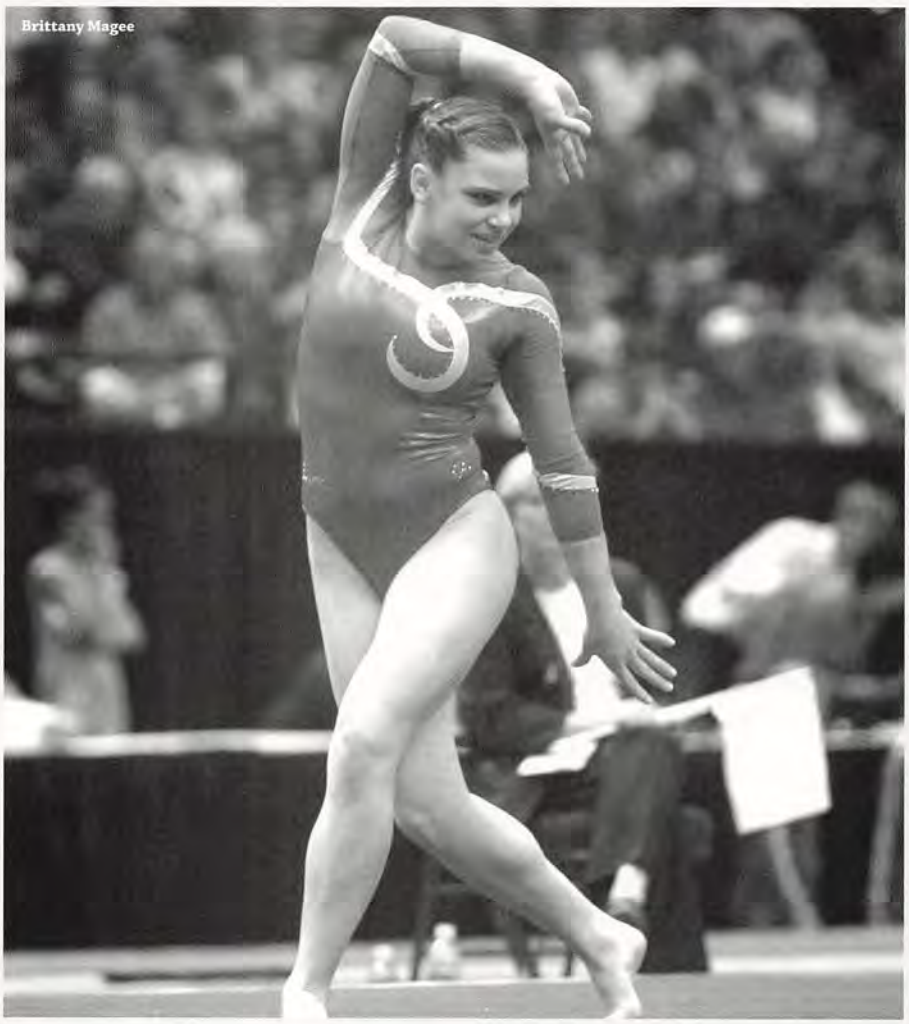
"I have been extremely gratified and touched by how everyone has come together to support this worthy cause," Patterson said. "Everyone knows someone whose life has been touched by this awful disease and we are committed to the fight against breast cancer."

But before the 2007 season and the "Drive 4 the Cause" meet rolls around, there is much work to be done in the practice gym. Sarah and David Patterson, in their 29th season, along with Assistant Coach Bryan Raschilla, in his 11th season with the Crimson Tide, and Volunteer Assistant Coach Dana Dobransky Duckworth, have their work cut out for them as they prepare a new-look Alabama squad for the rigors of NCAA competition.

Alabama finished third at last year's NCAA Championships, marking the 21st time the Tide has finished among the top four nationally. That mark is the best in NCAA history. The 2006 season also marked the Tide's 24th consecutive trip to the NCAA Championships. Only one team, Utah, has made as many consecutive NCAA trips as the Tide.

Things will certainly be different for the Tide in 2007. Gone are four All-America performers from last year's team, including one legend. For the first time in four years, four-time NCAA Champion Ashley Miles won't be standing at the end of the lineup waiting to put the exclamation point on the Crimson Tide's routines. While the Tide was prepared for the loss of Miles and All-Americas Mari Bayer and Dana Filetti, the retirement of sophomore Melanie Banville during the fall due to a pre-existing and ongoing back problem was an unexpected loss.

"I have learned during my coaching career that you face many obstacles each and every year and it is how you handle those difficult times that determines your success," Sarah Patterson said of Banville's retirement. "We just know our challenges ahead of time this year and, hopefully, can prepare for them now. It will provide an opportunity for someone new to step


Brittany Magee

University of Alabama

2007 Alabama Gymnastics Roster

Name	Hgt	Class	Hometown
Morgan Dennis	5-2	FR	Westhampton, N.J.
Ashley Ford	5-0	SO	Tuscaloosa
Terin Humphrey	5-1	JR	Bates City, Mo.
Ricki Lebegern	5-2	FR	Annandale, Va.
Brittany Magee	5-0	SO	Arlington, Texas
Cassie Martin	5-0	SO	Olney, Md.
Amanda Montgomery	5-4	SO	Jacksonville, Fla.
Ashley O'Neal	5-2	SO	Kennesaw, Ga.
Casey Overton	5-2	FR	Virginia Beach, Va.
Kassi Price	5-2	FR	Plantation, Fla.
Courtney Priess	5-3	SO	Hamilton, Ohio
Erin Rightley	5-3	SR	Ft. Walton Beach, Fla.
Jacqueline Shealy	5-2	FR	Tuscaloosa
Kaitlin White	5-5	JR	Allen, Texas

HEAD COACH: Sarah Patterson
ASSOCIATE COACH: David Patterson
ASSISTANT COACH: Bryan Raschilla
VOLUNTEER ASSISTANT: Dana Dobransky Duckworth

forward and help us be successful."

The Tide's new look starts with a pair of All-Americas, junior Terin Humphrey and sophomore Brittany Magee.

Humphrey has already earned nine All-American honors during her career and the 2005 NCAA Uneven Bars title. The two-time Olympic silver medalist underwent elbow surgery in the fall to remove bone chips that had been bothering her since her days of international competition. The surgery, performed by Alabama team physicians Dr. James Andrews and Dr. Lyle Cain, went even better than expected. Humphrey is expected to be ready when the regular season rolls around, but Patterson isn't concerned about rushing the Missouri native back into the lineup.

"We are looking to a complete recovery and will just take it one day at a time," Patterson said. "Terin has all the competitive experience she needs. At this point we are working hard to help her physically feel better and be pain free."

Magee joined the Tide last January from her native Texas and was an immediate hit. A staple of the Tide's vault, beam and floor exercise lineup, she earned All-America honors on the floor exercise. She also shared the SEC floor exercise and NCAA West Regional vault and floor exercise titles with Miles. Magee looks to compete in the all-around this season, adding in the uneven bars, and make an even bigger impact on the Tide's fortunes in year two.

Also returning is lone senior Erin Rightley. A former walk-on who earned a scholarship, the Florida native was a mainstay of the Tide's balance beam and vault lineup last season. She posted a career-best balance beam score of 9.875 at the NCAA West Regional Championships and a career-best 9.9 on the floor against Stanford. In addition to her scores, Rightley provides a quiet, nurturing leadership for the young Tide. Joining Humphrey in the junior class is Texan Kaitlin White. Competing in the vault, uneven bars and floor exercise last season, White has improved each season and should continue that trend in 2007.

Along with Magee, the sophomore class sports Cassie Martin, Courtney Priess, Ashley O'Neal and Ashley Ford. Martin competed in the uneven bars, balance beam and floor

exercise last season. The Maryland native turned in career-best marks of 9.875 on the bars and floor and a pair of 9.9s on the beam. O'Neal, from Georgia, competed vault, balance beam and floor exercise last season while Ohioan Priess saw action on the uneven bars, balance beam and floor exercise. Ford, who came to Bama from nearby Northport, competed on the vault last year. Floridian Amanda Montgomery added depth to the Tide's uneven bars lineup.

Joining the Tide's sophomore six are five rookies, giving the Tide a seriously young outlook on the season. Morgan Dennis, Kassi Price, Ricki Lebegern and Casey Overton have all competed at the highest levels. Price is a six-year member of the U.S. National Team. Overton, also a member of the U.S. National squad, hails from the same gym as former Alabama All-Americas Alexis Brion and Dana Filetti. Lebgern was a member of the U.S. Junior Olympic National Team. Dennis finished in the top-10 of the all-around at the 2004 U.S. Classic and was a U.S. Championship qualifier that same year.

And while those four all bring impeccable gymnastics credentials to this year's team, Jacqueline Shealy brings that and something more. She is the first Patterson legacy and her heritage is pure Crimson Tide royalty. Her mother, Ann Woods, was on Sarah and David Patterson's first team at Alabama and was the Tide's first scholarshipped gymnast, helping pave the way for today's success. Jacqueline's father, Steadman, was an Alabama hero is his own right, winning a pair of national championships for coach Paul W. Bryant as Alabama's quarterback in the late 1970s.

"In our first couple of years here we'd have 50 people in the stands and they'd all be Ann Woods' family," Patterson said with a laugh.

As a program, Alabama has come a long way from those fledgling crowds. Last season, the Tide drew a school and SEC record 12,654 fans per meet, including 15,162 to the "Drive 4 the Cause" meet against Florida meet, the largest crowd in the nation last year.

The Auburn meet is one of seven home events in Coleman Coliseum this year, the most in Tuscaloosa in more than two decades. The rest of the home slate includes Oklahoma, Kentucky, UNC, LSU and UCLA before finishing off with the NCAA Central Region Championship on April 14. And to add to the excitement this year, at the end of the regular season, at the UCLA meet, one lucky ticket holder will win a new car.

"It is certainly a demanding home slate," Patterson said. "Every year we put together a schedule that will challenge us throughout the year so that by the time we get to the championship season, we have seen the best and are prepared for that level of competition."

As the Tide moves forward into the season, it will be young but talented and they will again be looking toward the last night of the season, with their eye on a singular goal.

"Every year, no matter what our lineup or what challenges lie in front of us, our goal is the same," Sarah Patterson said. "I think that focus is a large part of our success. Our goal is always to be on the floor the last night of the season with a chance to win an NCAA Championship." ■

University of Alabama

On The Move

Alabama's latest sport is taking first strokes

ROWING BY KIRK McNAIR

Alabama has a new sport this year. The sport is rowing. The athletes who perform it are the crew. And don't look for the Crimson Tide to ever have a superstar in the sport.

"You can't have a superstar," Coach Larry Davis explained. "You can't get extra strokes."

Davis had just come from doing some boat repair. The former coach of an Alabama club rowing team who was selected to guide the team when it was elevated to varsity status in the athletics department admitted that his sport requires a few more things of the coach.

On the other hand, he gets to coach from a nice perch, riding along in a motorlaunch as his team rows up and down the Black Warrior River. ("The barge operators, particularly Parker Towing Company [of Tuscaloosa], operating on the river have come to recognize when we are out and are very courteous," Davis said.)

When they are out is often very early, from "sunup until 8 a.m." for the varsity and in the afternoons for walk-ons and novices. Novices, usually freshmen, are those with no previous rowing experience who are being groomed to later move up to the varsity. There is also off-water work for the athletes, weight training and conditioning. Part of that work is on "ergs, short for ergometer, which are rowing simulators to help in strength and conditioning.

Alabama has had a club team since 1987 and Davis coached it beginning in 1997.

Alabama is feeling its way with the new sport. It is an excellent sport to help an athletics department be in compliance with Title IX requirements, which essentially mandate an equal number of sports opportunities for women as for men. The problem is there is no women's football, which requires a large number of players. (Never mind that football is what pays the bills for most other sports, including all women's athletics.)

Across the nation, schools have been forced to give up men's sports in order to reach compliance. Alabama would prefer not to eliminate sports, and so rowing was an addition. Rowing has 20 scholarships, but they are equivalency scholarships, meaning they can be divided up. Most schools put 50-60 women on partial rowing scholarship. Alabama will phase in the full 20 over the next few seasons.

One thing Alabama has going for it is a great "arena." Davis said the Black Warrior is an exceptional venue for rowing. A college meet, or race, is over 2000 meters. The Black Warrior has eight miles of straight, protected (from wind) water and good viewing points on both the Tuscaloosa and Northport sides of the river.

The results of rowing are kept by boat. In a two-boat race, obviously, the boat picks up either a win or a loss. In a three-boat race the second boat would have a record of 1-1, while the winner would be 2-0 and the third place boat 0-2.

This spring the Crimson Tide will have only one home meet, hosting Murray State on Easter weekend, April 7. Davis thinks after the word gets out about the Black Warrior that many teams will want to row in Tuscaloosa.

Crews operate in Eight-plus and Four-plus events. The plus is for the Coxswain, a non-rower who steers the shell. Of the 80-90 college teams in the nation, 18 will earn the right to go to the NCAA Championships.

Alabama has new equipment, four eights (as the shells for eight rowers are called) and two fours and four paradoubles, small boats used for training. "We need one or two more racing hulls," Davis said. A four is 45 feet long, an eight 58 feet long.

Boats are fairly expensive. And the big expense will come a few years down the road when Alabama builds a boathouse. A boathouse is more than just shelter for the boats. It will also be a training area and is expected to have a restaurant on top with a view of the river. With an estimated price in excess of $2 million, Davis said it will be the best in the nation.

Rowing has a split season. The Crimson Tide has taken part in several well-known fall events, including the Head of the Charles Regatta in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and the Head of the Chattahoochee Regatta in Chattanooga.

"The fall season, in general, we did pretty well," Davis said of his first team's early efforts. "We could have done some things better."

A race takes about six and a half minutes "if you want to be competitive," Davis said. With six to eight events in a normal meet, the event takes two to three hours. Obviously, in addition to the proficiency of the crew, the conditions–notably current and wind–affect the time. If a meet on the Black Warrior is with the current and you are doing a radio broadcast from the Tuscaloosa side, the shells will be going right to left.

It is not unusual for races to be decided by a distance covered "in the blink of an eye," Davis said. A boat that wins by a length (the winning boat's stern, or back, is even with the next boat's bow, or front) would be by about four seconds. A half length win is about two seconds and a one second win about two seats, or a quarter of the boat. Any win over four seconds is considered "open water," meaning there is space between the stern of the winner and the bow of the loser.

The first 250 meters and the final 250 meters of the 2000-meter race are usually sprints. In between the crew will be in a basic cadence.

Most of Alabama's team of 24 varsity crew were members of the Alabama club team. Bama has added 38 novice rowers. "Recruiting" was by

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word of mouth, even putting flyers out at freshman orientation. "We had a fantastic response," Davis said. "I expected perhaps 45 or 50 to look into it and we had about 70." There will be dropoffs "because it's a lot of work."

Moving from club sport to varsity sport requires a new commitment on the part of the crew. "All of us had to learn to function within The University as a sport rather than a club team," Davis said. "There are issues of safety, NCAA rules, and other things."

And for the women there were changes, too. "As a club, about all they had to do was pay their dues and they were in," Davis said. "Now there are time and physical commitments, and personal responsibility to the rest of the team. Before we might have to have a fund-raiser. We don't have to do that now. The athletics department buys the equipment." But, Davis makes clear, more is expected of the women.

Davis doesn't go out and recruit crew members from high school rowing teams, at least not in Alabama. There are some prep level and youth club teams around the nation. But most of his athletes will be women who competed in other sports in high school.

Unlike ball sports in which hand-eye coordination is critical, Davis said rowing is a sport of "timing and rhythm and balance under high levels of mental and physical stress. You have to do the same things together. You have to find the resources to keep pushing beyond what you think you can do. You can't have any careless strokes. You do the same thing over and over again."

Unlike a sport like football where a great running back might be able to overcome a weakness in the line, in rowing one rower can't make up for the deficiency of another. And if a mistake is made, it can't be overcome like a receiver coming back to snare an underthrown pass.

Coach Larry Davis

University of Alabama

"As in all athletics, if it is done correctly, it looks easy," Davis said. "Try it yourself and you see there is more to it than meets the eye."

Among those who do it best for Davis' first Alabama rowing team are Bryn Crawford, a senior from Auburn; Marley McKenzie, a senior from Coral Springs, Florida; McKenna Frease, a junior from Cordova, Tennessee; Rachel Kimbrough, a senior from Huntsville; Stephanie Rainey, a senior from Huntsville; Sarah Beaver, a sophomore from Wellington, Florida; Leigh Ann Lazarus, a junior from Hoover; and Kristin Liveoak, a senior from Madison.

Team captains are Frease, Kimbrough, and Rainey. ■

Fine Fall Finish

Alabama Rowing team closed out its fall with its best outing of its inaugural season at the Head of the South Regatta in Augusta, Ga. this weekend coming away with its first ever gold medal finishes. The Tide competed in four races, winning two and medaling in all four.

"We've been moving things around all fall and I thought that everything really came together nicely this weekend," Coach Larry Davis said. "Not only did we get our first wins at this meet, but we beat some folks who had beaten us before, and those we had beaten before, we put some more distance between us this time out."

Alabama won the Women's Championship 8+ with a time of 20:47.7, more than 20 seconds ahead of second place Georgia. The Tide also won the Women's Championship 4+ race, beating out second place Jacksonville University by a minute with a 22:31.7.

In the Women's Lightweight 4+, the Tide finished second behind Georgia's "A" boat, posting a 24:34.9. In the Novice 8+ Alabama grabbed third and fourth by a slim margin. The Tide's "A" boat finished with a 22:50.0 while the "B" turned in a 22:50.2. The Tide's third novice 8 boat finished ninth.

"Our three novice boats did a really good job," Davis said. "Our "A" boat was really close job to get into second and overall we saw some good improvement from the week before."

With the fall season over, Alabama begins to prepare for the spring season and dual meet competition. The Crimson Tide returns to action Sunday, March 18, against Notre Dame at Oak Ridge, Tennessee. ■

2006-07 Alabama Varsity Rowing Roster

Name	Class	Hometown
Katie Allaway	SO	Tuscaloosa
Cara Allison	SO	Wellington, Fla.
Sarah Beaver	JR	Spanish Fort
Caitlin Bonner	JR	Sylacauga
Bryn Crawford	SR	Auburn
Victoria Croy	SO	Huntsville
McKenna Frease	JR	Cordova, Tenn.
Courtney Green	SO	Birmingham
Rachel Justiss	SO	Fairhope
Rachel Kimbrough	SR	Huntsville
Leigh Ann Lazarus	JR	Hoover
Erin Linsin	SR	Alpharetta, Ga.
Cristin Liveoak	SR	Madison
Christina McClellan	SO	Daphne
Genna McIlwaine	SO	Adamsville
Marley McKenzie	SR	Coral Springs, Fla.
Rebecca Moore	SR	Severna Park, Md.
Kelly Parker	Jr	Albertville
Katie Pouncey	JR	Ozark
Stephanie Rainey	SR	Huntsville
Jennifer Rankin	JR	Hoover
Margaret Strojny	JR	Riverside, Ill.
Laura Stumbo	JR	Hoover
Kathryn Tippey	SO	Tuscaloosa

Novice Crew: Veronia Abbott, Jessica Autrey, Courtney Crumby, Chelsea Dabney, Mellisa Danaceau, Kristen Frecker, Heather Goodlett, Christine Gossman, Molly Graham, Karen Ishmael, Courtney Lewallen, Erica Lopez, Allie Manning, Jaqulyn Marcinak, Nikki Marotta, Christine Miller, Megan Missildine, Tacoma Morrisey, Stacey Ogle, Alizabeth Oswald, Veeronica Parsons, Jamie Ravenna, Bailey Sanders, Jessy Scivley, Mary Sims, Danielle Sims, Sarah Smith, Katie Spohr, Catherine Tucker, Jodie Urban, Cori Urban, Cathryn Whitlock, Sarah Witt.

HEAD COACH: Larry Davis
ASSISTANT COACH: Marina Traub
GRADUATE ASSISTANT: Megan McKee

ANOTHER POINT

Hollinger in background, but key Bama element

University of Alabama

Father knows best, it seems. A little over two years ago South Alabama Athletics Director Joe Gottfried learned that a Mobile area basketball player wanted to go to Alabama, where Joe's son Mark is the head basketball coach. Dad told son about it, but son wasn't particularly interested.

"I told Johnny Jones (former Alabama assistant coach who is now head coach at North Texas) about him," Mark Gottfried said. "North Texas spent about three months recruiting him. And then right at the end of the season we decided we wanted him and went in and signed him."

The player in question was Brandon Hollinger, a lightly-regarded signee in the year of Richard Hendrix. With Bama landing prep All-America Hendrix, hardly anyone noticed the addition of the 5-11, 170-pound Hollinger from LeFlore High School in Mobile to last year's Bama freshman signing class. That group also included Alonzo Gee, who would be a freshman All-Southeastern Conference performer, and promising Yamene Coleman, the 6-9 center who would be redshirted. And, besides, Hollinger was a point guard, and the Tide had one of the nation's best in Ronald Steele to play that position.

It wasn't hard for Gottfried to land Hollinger.

"I've been an Alabama fan all the way," Hollinger said. "I knew when they offered me a scholarship that I was going to take it."

He's the first person in his family to make it into college. "My family is very proud of me, behind me all the way," Hollinger, a communications major, said.

Alabama was ranked very high in most pre-season assessments and polls prior to this season. Those analyses centered on the return of junior All-America point guard Ronald Steele, senior center Jermareo Davidson, and sophomore power forward Hendrix to the starting lineup, as well as the belief that Gee would step into a starting role to replace the wing spot manned by the graduated Jean Felix.

Almost no one noted that the Tide returned a fourth starter.

When Chuck Davis was lost for the season with a knee injury in the Southeastern Conference opener against Ole Miss, Gottfried had to revamp the playing rotation. Hollinger picked up more minutes in that game after Davis went out and the freshman scored a career-high 13 points.

Hollinger, who had been providing relief for Steele, was moved into the starting five for the Tide's second game of the year, at Auburn.

"I won't ever forget that," Hollinger said. "Auburn is our rival no matter the sport, so going in there in front of a hostile crowd was a good experience for my first start. We played hard, like we did in every game, and pulled off the win."

And Hollinger started the rest of the way, all 18 games through the NCAA Tournament 62-59 loss to Final Four participant UCLA. He didn't have eye-popping statistics, by any means. He averaged only 2.3 points, 1.2 rebounds, and 1.2 assists per game. But he did score 10 points in his first-ever trip into Rupp Arena in Alabama's 68-64 win over the Wildcats in Lexington. "I knew it would be loud and that I would have to play hard and focus, keeping the crowd out of my head," he said. "My team played good and I tried to play along with them."

This season almost everyone had again penciled in various lineup possibilities with Hollinger relegated to his role as Steele's relief man. And that could be the future for Hollinger this year.. But to open the season, Gottfried said he was comfortable with the five top returning players–including Hollinger–being the starting five.

"Brandon is a steady player," Gottfried said. "We love having him on our team. He's always going to be in the mix in our rotation."

In some respects it should not have been a surprise that Hollinger would be a fine player. The state of Alabama has a long history of producing outstanding basketball players, and Hollinger was the 6A Player of the Year in the state his senior season. He averaged 19 points, eight rebounds, six assists, and 4.5 steals his senior season at LeFlore. That was on a team that went 35-1, losing only in the state championship game, and reaching number two in the nation. All five starters from that team signed college scholarships.

With Hollinger and Steele in the starting lineup, Bama was in an old-fashioned two-guard front much of the season in which Bama was 10-6 in SEC games and 18-13 overall. Steele became known as an Iron Man of college basketball, usually playing all 40 minutes of a game. Although Steele was technically the point guard, Hollinger was able to help him rest a bit by bringing the ball up court.

Hollinger said, "Most freshmen think they have to be a star to get noticed. My role was to help Ronald Steele. I could help by bringing the ball up court so he wouldn't be fighting that pressure each trip. I had to play good defense. And I had to shoot when I got open shorts. I played the role Coach Gottfried wanted me to play.

"Last year was very exciting for me," Hollinger said. "I'm not sure what I expected, but I didn't expect to be a starter. I've been watching the NCAA Tournament all my life, and then I got to start in it."

Hollinger admitted, "Last year I was pretty nervous. Everything was new. I'm more confident this year because of my game experience. I feel that I can compete with the guys at this level. Last year I didn't know."

Hollinger also didn't expect to be a starter this season, although he said he worked hard to be one of the five men on the floor. "I think of myself as a point guard," he said. And he knows that Bama's point guard is Steele, regarded by many as the nation's best.

"I think of my role as being to provide relief for Ronald," he said. "I have to score a little more, have more assists, and limit my turnovers.

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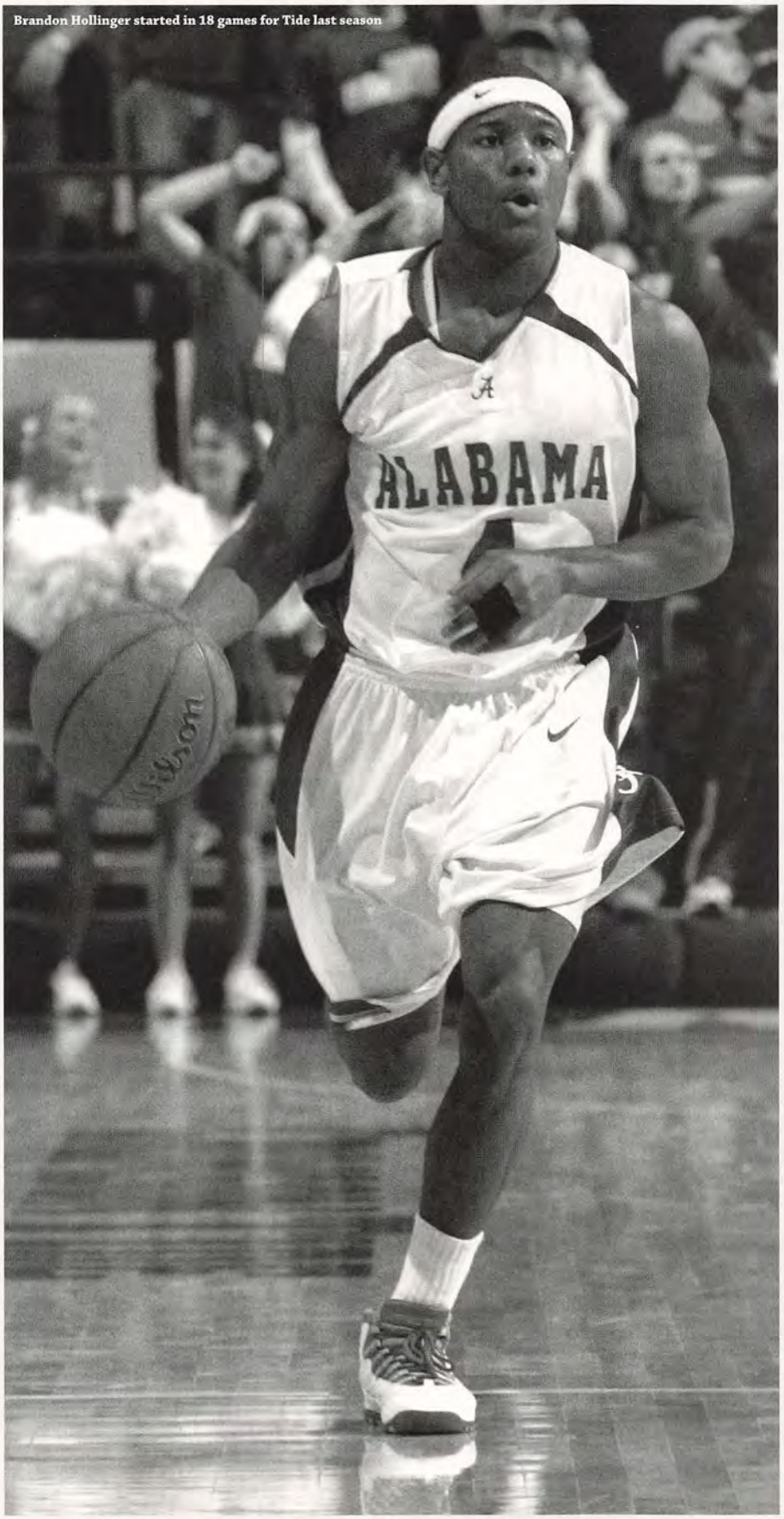


Brandon Hollinger started in 18 games for Tide last season

University of Alabama

"I want to play harder than I did last year, but that will be tough to do since I was playing as hard as I could."

Hollinger said, "You don't realize how much harder college basketball is than high school ball until you do it. In high school you'll have nights when you might can get 25 or 30 points. In college you are always playing against great competition. That's every night, but particularly in the SEC. Everyone is good in our league. Every team can beat you on a given night, so you have to play hard every night."

Hollinger thinks the SEC got renewed respect with Florida and LSU in the Final Four last year. "I was hoping an SEC team would win it," he said. "Watching the Final Four I couldn't help but be aware that we had beaten two of them (LSU and National Champion Florida) and had a chance to beat a third (UCLA)."

He said there was also the adjustment of the shot clock during the game. But, he said, the biggest adjustment is another clock. "Managing your time," he said. "There's a lot of time spent on basketball and conditioning and study hall. In high school it was a couple of hours after school and then go home. Here everything you do is scheduled around basketball, which is the way it has to be."

Steele is one of Hollinger's biggest boosters. "Brandon is a great player," Steele said. "He got kind of overlooked as a freshman, but he came in and played well. He improved during his first year and he improved this year. He's the best defender on our team and he can score.

"Hopefully, he can help me and help the team. He helps keep me fresh and able to keep running. He's a funny guy and a great teammate."

Steele and Hollinger have known each other since their prep days. "In my senior year, his junior year, we (Birmingham John Carroll) beat them in the state semifinals, so I have to remind him of that," Steele said.

Hollinger thinks that Alabama can set its sights high this season. "Our goal is the national championship," he said. "Not just get to the tournament. To get there and win it.

"We have all the ingredients, but we have to develop the chemistry. We have all-stars. We have depth that we didn't have last year. Our freshmen and our junior college transfer (Mykal Riley) are really good. Alonzo Gee is playing great.

"That's a good package for a team to go to the Final Four."

Hollinger said he is working "every day" to improve his point guard skills, shooting, and ball-handling.

"I worked every day in the summer against Ronald Steele, the best point guard in the country. I tried to get the most out of that opportunity. That's a pretty good education, to have an All-America to work against every day. And it comes free." ■

EARLY ADDITIONS

Spring and winter sports have November signees

Rico Pickett

Scout.com

In early November, many college sports enjoy a week-long early signing period. The opportunity is for athletes in winter and spring sports, such as basketball and baseball, not in football. A primary difference in the early signing period for these sports from football is the information factor.

A school cannot release information about new signees until all paperwork has been received from the prospective student-athlete and that athlete cleared through various administrative channels. In football, that is all handled prior to signing day. Football prospects sign in the morning, FAX the paperwork in, and are universally known by noon. In addition to lasting the full week, sometimes athletes in other sports (who may not be on full scholarship) often mail in the paperwork. Additionally, there can be a large number of signees to be cleared. The result is that not all signees are immediately known and, therefore, may not be listed here.

Historically, it takes a second story in a subsequent issue to announce all new signees from the November signing period, and so we will have signees from baseball, softball, gymnastics, etc. later. Additionally, there is another signing period for spring and winter sports beginning April 11.

Indeed, men's basketball had not announced its signees, but men's basketball is the closest thing to football in having recruiting monitored. As a result, it is known there was a bit of juggling in what had been expected to be the basketball recruiting class of Coach Mark Gottfried. Prior to signing day there had been a concern that Decatur star Rico Pickett, considered the top prospect in the state, might not sign with Alabama. He had made an announcement a few weeks earlier that he was going to reconsider his commitment, to make sure he was doing the right thing. He looked at several other schools, including Illinois.

But Pickett had said all along that Alabama remained his first choice. And on the first day of the early signing period, November 8, the 6-3, 185-pound point guard signed with Alabama.

"I tried searching around to see if there was a better situation than Alabama, but I didn't find one," Pickett said. "Alabama is the right place for me."

Pickett is one of three Scout.com four-star signees for Bama. As a result of those three players all ranked among the nation's top 100, the Crimson Tide was ranked 13th in the nation in men's basketball recruiting in the early signing period. Defending national champion Florida was the only Southeastern Conference school ranked ahead of Bama. The Gators, always among the leaders in recruiting, are ninth. Kansas State was judged to have had the top recruiting class, followed by Syracuse, Duke, Purdue, Michigan State, Ohio State, and Indiana in the top eight. After Florida, it was Georgetown 10th, Memphis 11th, Virginia Tech 12th and Bama. Following the Tide were 14 UCLA, 15 Texas, 16 Arizona State, 17 DePaul, 18 Michigan, 19 South Carolina, 20 Florida State, 21 Wake Forest, 22 Villanova, 23 Oklahoma State, 24 LSU and 25 St. John's.

Also signing with the Tide are Senario Hillman, a 6-2, 175-pound wing guard from Wilkinson County High School in Irwington, Georgia, and Justin Knox, a 6-9, 205-pound power forward from Tuscaloosa Central.

"All three of these young men are very good students academically," said lAlabama Coach Mark Gottfried . "They are interested in graduating from college, which is something we like, and they all have terrific potential on the basketball floor."

Pickett averaged 20 points, seven assists and six rebounds at Decatur High School. Decatur finished the 2006 season with a 20-10 record, advancing to the Northwest sub-regional.

"Rico is a player who we think can be an impact player at the guard position," said Gottfried. "He's a player that can play both the point guard and the off-guard, and we have recruited him primarily as a point guard. He's a great athlete. He really sees the floor. He's a terrific passer. And we think he's got a chance to have a great future."

Pickett is the favorite to be Mr. Basketball in Alabama this year. Last year he averaged 16 points, four rebounds and four assists as his team went 20-10. Last summer he was Most Valuable Player of All-Star Sports Week as he led his North team to victory with 21 points, five assists, and four blocked shots.

Pickett is ranked the ninth best point guard in the nation by Scout.com. He selected the Tide over Florida State, North Carolina State, and Illinois.

Hillman is a very athletic guard, perhaps capable of playing point, but expected to be a wing player. Scout.com called him "one of the elite athletes in the Class of 2007. Works some at the point and that's an area he's working on. Absolutely a high riser who hammers them down with the best of them and pound for pound might be the best athlete in the nation. Prefers to shoot on the move rather than the catch."

Hillman chose Bama over Georgia and Clemson. He is ranked 13th in the nation among shooting guards.

Hillman averaged 21 points, five rebounds, four assists and three steals a game as a junior at Wilkinson County, a team that finished 29-2 last season, advancing to the Final Four of the Class A in Georgia and a team that has produced 89 wins in the past three seasons. Hillman's team finished second in the region championship last season, and he has been All-State for the past three consecutive seasons. Hillman was the Regional Player of the Year the past two seasons, 2005 and 2006. Going into this, his senior season, he has made 128 dunks in three seasons and has a 41-inch vertical jump. He was recently featured in RISE magazine in its story on the "Elite 24 Hoops Class" for 2006-07.

"Senario is an electrifying, very exciting player," said Gottfried. "He plays the game with a high level of intensity. He is also a great ball defender and can dominate a game from the guard position. He has a scorer's mentality and will be a very fun player for our fans to watch over the course of his career."

Knox, a hometown product who averaged 12 points, six rebounds, and five blocked shots per game for Central as a junior, did not begin to get national attention until he had successful summer performances in various camps. An excellent student, he was offered by LSU. He was ranked 25th in the nation among power forwards.

"Justin is a local player, and we're very excited about him signing," said Gottfried. "He is just beginning to blossom as a basketball player. He's 6-foot-9. He's a great student in the classroom, and his best basketball is in front of him. He's got a great touch from the foul line. He's a shot blocker and can rebound really well. We just think his personality and character fit with our program."

In earlier reports, Bama had a commitment from Dontrell Taylor, a 6-8, 215-pound power

forward from Dunwoody, Georgia. At the time Scout.com announced that commitment last summer, it was with some surprise, because Scout.com did not think that Bama had offered Taylor. That may be the case as Taylor did not sign with Alabama and was reportedly considering other offers.

Among signees in other sports for Alabama:

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

After adding seven newcomers in her first recruiting class to the Alabama women's basketball program last season, Coach Stephany Smith and her staff announced the signing of four preps to her second class with the Tide. Caitlin Hollifield, Tierney Jenkins, Varisia Raffington and Daleisha Carn will join the team for the 2007-08 season.

"We've talked a lot about forward progress with this program," Smith said. "With this class, we have once again made forward progress. They are as talented, if not more, than the class we just brought in. These players are all very versatile, so we feel that with this group we are covering all of our bases."

Hollifield, perhaps the most decorated of the group, hails from Powell, Tennessee, where she stars for Powell High School and Coach Clay Young. Hollifield, the number 48 player in the nation according to Scout.com, was a Tennessee Sportswriters Association all-state performer last year and is a three-time Street & Smith honorable mention All-America honoree.

A native of Tallahassee, Florida, Raffington competes for Florida High and Coach Lisa Kelly. She earned Florida Sportswriters Association 3A first team all-state a season ago after leading Florida High to the 3A state title. She captured the championship game MVP honors after scoring 13 points and grabbing 17 rebounds. Raffington helped her team reach the regional finals as a sophomore.

Carn, the second of two signees from the Sunshine state, is in her senior season at Englewood High School in Jacksonville, Florida. Competing for Coach George McCloud, Carn is a four-star recruit according to FloridaHoops.com and is listed among the top recruits in the region by HoopGurlz.com.

Hunter Slatton

University of Alabama

The second recruit from Tennessee in the group, Jenkins helped lead her Wilson Central High School team under the tutelage of Coach Bud Brandon to the Class AAA state title after helping her team to a Sweet 16 appearance as a sophomore.

MEN'S GOLF

Alabama Men's Golf Coach Jay Seawell has the nation's number one ranked team, so one might expect him to range far and wide in recruiting. And he may. But his first two signees are in high school about a three iron from the Crimson Tide practice facility at Ol' Colony. Tuscaloosa Northridge High School teammates Phillip Weaver and Hunter Slatton signed with the Crimson Tide.

Both are expected to be redshirted as Seawell's current Bama squad is not only talented, but also returns almost intact for the 2007-08 season.

Both are also to be helpful to the academic reputation of the Crimson Tide. Weaver has a 3.81 grade point average and Slatton a 4.083.

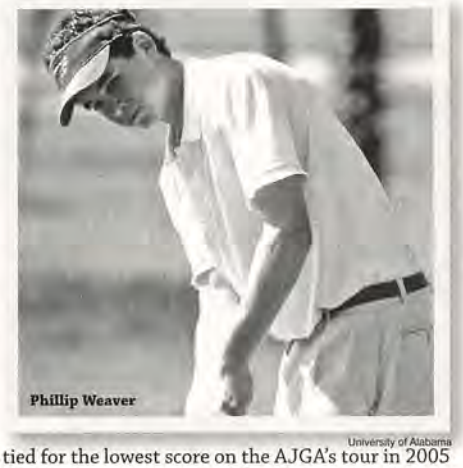
Weaver formerly played at Tuscaloosa Academy as a member of the state championship team for private schools and was individual runner-up for the state title in 2003. Northridge has been runner-up for the Alabama High Schools state title the past two years. He has competed in some of the nation's top events, including 25 Southeastern Junior Golf Tour and 12 American Golf Association events. He has participated in the Future Masters since and the Alabama Golf Association junior championships since 1998. He played in qualifying for the United States Amateur in Connecticut. Weaver, who averages 290 driving, has numerous competitive rounds in the 60s.

Slatton was also a member of the Tuscaloosa Academy team in 2003 before transferring to Northridge. At Northridge he has been the individual state champion (2005) and also finished eighth in 2004 and fourth last spring. Last year he finished second in the Joe King at Auburn and the Blue-Gray in Montgomery and won the Golden Eagle in Athens. He was named a Hewlett Packard Scholastic Junior All-America, one of only 12 in the nation and the first male from Alabama in 10 years. He is ranked the 58th best junior in the nation by GolfWeek Magazine. He is ranked 40th in the class of 2007 by Pol and 32nd by GolfWeek. His playing schedule is ranked 21st most difficult in the nation. He finished seventh at the Mizuno Junior, which earned him exemption into the American Junior Golf Association Footjoy Invitational, where his 13th place finish earned him exemptions into the remaining majors–Rolex, Ping, and Polo.

WOMEN'S GOLF

Alabama Women's Golf Coach Mic Potter went to climactic extremes for two new players. New Bama signees are Courtney Harter of Clearwater, Florida, and Camilla Lennarth from Stockholm, Sweden.

Harter, who competed for Palm Harbor University High School, is ranked 48th among 2007 graduates by the American Junior Golf Association (AJGA), she is the 2006 AJGA Golf Pride Junior Classic Champion. Harter also captured the title at the 2005 North & South Junior Championship and


Phillip Weaver

University of Alabama

tied for the lowest score on the AJGA's tour in 2005 when she recorded a 66 at the LPGA International.

Lennarth is the latest in a string of Swedish players to compete for the Tide. No fewer than nine competitors from Sweden have teed it up for Alabama, including the most recent, Helena Blomberg, a true freshman on this year's Tide unit.

A student at Klippans Gymnasieskola in Klippans, Sweden, Lennarth plays for the Troxhammar club team. She earned a spot on the Swedish Junior National team a year ago and is the third-ranked junior player in Sweden. Lennarth is ranked 45th in the most recent American Junior Golf Association (AJGA) rankings.

In May, she earned a 12th-place finish at the Thunderbird International Junior, an event designed to bring together many of the top junior players in the world, in Scottsdale, Arizona. Lennarth also recorded a ninth-place finish at the Spanish Ladies Amateur earlier this year.

WOMEN'S TENNIS

Alabama Women's Tennis Coach Jenny Mainz announced the signing of Meritt Emery, the daughter of Kentucky Head Men's Tennis Coach Dennis Emery.

"We are thrilled that Meritt will be joining our Crimson Tide tennis family," said Mainz. "Meritt will be a very positive asset and will contribute immediately. She is a proven winner and has the capabilities to help lead this Alabama program to new heights. It is always exciting when we can sign a strong player from the Southern section. Not only is Meritt successful on the tennis front, she is an exceptional individual with tremendous character. We are very much looking forward to her arrival."

Emery's father is now in his 24th year as coach for the Wildcats. He is ranked eighth all time with 514 career victories.

Ranked 149th nationally in the Girls 18s, Meritt Emery will be looking to become only the second individual to win four Kentucky state championships. She is also ranked 16th in the Southern Girls 18s. She has recorded numerous victories over players ranked in the top 30 nationally, including victories against Jennifer Meredith, Mallory Burdette and Claire Bartlett.

Meritt's brother, Matt, played tennis at Kentucky from 2001-04. He was a four-year letterwinner who compiled a 56-74 career singles record. ■

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Danny Ford is home on the ranch

After a football playing career at Alabama that came up short of lofty expectations and a coaching career marked by the highest of highs and the lowest of lows, Danny Ford is finding joy in life from something other than football. He's running a cattle farm.

Ford's 175-acre farm, located on the outskirts of Clemson University in South Carolina, includes both cattle and horses and plenty of work to keep the 58-year-old busy from sun up to sun down. But it's the kind of work that Ford relishes. He started the farm nine years ago after being let go as head football coach at Arkansas.

"I enjoy animals and I enjoy farming," he said. "I like to be out in the country and do what I want to do."

How long Ford can continue ranching may depend on how long his knees hold up. He had arthroscopic knee surgery last year and is due for a knee replacement surgery in the near future.

"Playing ball didn't help," Ford said of his bad knees, "and, on top of that, everyone in my family has had knee problems, so it's kind of hereditary, too."

On the side these days, Ford does a little public speaking, dabbles in a few business ventures and travels. He and wife, Deborah, have four grown daughters with one residing in Texas and another in Colorado. The other two live in South Carolina. The family member the Fords see the most is 10-year-old, grandson, Jordan, who stays with them on weekends and during the summer.

"He mostly comes here for ball games," Ford said of Jordan.

Ah, yes, ball games. For much of Ford's life, ball games were what weekends were all about. The Gadsden native suited up for Alabama from 1967 to 1969, starring at offensive tackle for the Crimson Tide. Incidentally, the decision to head to Tuscaloosa for college was an easy one for Ford. Alabama had earned national championships in both 1964 and 1965, so the lure of being a member of the Tide was obvious: If you wanted to be a champion, you went to Alabama.

But, unfortunately for Ford and his peers, Alabama lost its championship touch during that time period. The Tide went 8-2-1 in 1967, 8-3 in 1968 and 6-5 in 1969. Included in that three-year stretch was an 0-3 record against Tennessee, an 0-3 record in bowl games, a 49-26 beat down at the hands of Auburn in '69 and, of course, the absence of any national or even Southeastern Conference titles.

"We didn't reach our goals for why we came to The University of Alabama," Ford said. "Having been a coach for so many years, I look back now and I know the reasons why we struggled. It had to do with personnel and recruiting. We lost a lot of recruits during that time, and we had players playing out of position. Also during that time, Coach (Paul) Bryant had gone to recruiting bigger linemen and many of them ended up quitting, which left us short on personnel."

Alabama endured one more sub-par season in 1970, going 6-5-1, before Bryant returned the Tide to prominence by switching to the wishbone offense. The Tide won eight SEC titles and three national titles during the 1970s.

"Alabama had a little bump in the road, and we just happened to be in that bump," Ford said.

Individually, however, Ford did his part to help the Tide have success on the field. Blocking for some Tide standouts like quarterback Scott Hunter and running back Johnny Musso, Ford earned a reputation for being a tough, hard-nosed competitor.

"Coach Bryant really liked Danny," said Clem Gryska, an assistant coach at the time. "He liked the fact that Danny was one of those ol' offensive linemen who didn't mind getting sweaty and dirty and giving everything he had."

But being fierce and feisty wasn't enough to earn Ford an opportunity in the NFL.

"There just wasn't a great demand for 195-pound offensive tackles in the NFL at that time," Ford deadpanned.

Opportunity, however, came knocking from another direction.

Danny Ford

University of Alabama

After Ford completed his eligibility, Bryant, offering proof that he really did think highly of the hard-working offensive lineman, kept him on as a graduate assistant coach for two years before promoting him to a regular staff assistant for the 1972 and 1973 seasons. In 1973, UPI named Alabama its national champion prior to the Tide's 24-23 loss to Notre Dame in the Sugar Bowl.

"Even though I didn't get to experience what it was like to win a national championship as a player, fortunately I was able a few years later to see what it's like and be a part of that and understand what it takes to achieve something like that," said Ford, who earned a graduate degree during his extra time in Tuscaloosa.

For Ford, coaching under Bryant was an honor and a privilege.

"He was the best I've ever been around," Ford said. "His secret was that he was able to get more out of an individual than they thought they could give. As he got older, he probably wasn't as hands-on as he had been, but the key was he had assistant coaches who had played for him and knew what he wanted and how to do things like he wanted. The assistant coaches wanted to please him, too. I just wish I had learned half of what I was taught while I was down there. I still have our coaches' meeting notes, but more importantly I remember how he handled things and I tried to handle things the same way when faced with similar circumstances."

After Alabama's national championship season in 1973, Ford took an assistant coaching job at Virginia Tech when fellow Bama Assistant Jimmy Sharpe was named head coach at VPI. He spent three seasons in Blacksburg before heading to Clemson-his home for the next 12 years. He served as an assistant to another former Tider, the late Charley Pell, in 1977 and 1978 and was promoted to head

coach for Clemson's Gator Bowl meeting with Ohio State, a game made famous for a punch thrown by Ohio State's legendary head coach Woody Hayes at a Clemson player.

"As far as the punch, I just remember that it happened, but I also remember that we were lucky enough to win that game and Clemson hadn't been to a bowl game in a while," Ford said. "We had gotten beat on TV really bad a year earlier and we didn't want to get embarrassed on national TV two years in a row."

As head coach of the Tigers, Ford didn't just end the days of embarrassing performances by the Tigers; he turned the Tigers into a perennial Atlantic Coast Conference power. The high point came in 1981 when Ford guided Clemson to a perfect 12-0 record and the national championship, sealed by an Orange Bowl victory over tradition-rich Nebraska. Only 33 at the time, Ford became the youngest coach ever to win a national championship as well as earn national coach of the year honors.

Still today, Ford credits what he learned from his playing and coaching days at Alabama for what happened at Clemson in 1981.

"It all goes back to what you experienced, and what I experienced was that every year Coach Bryant expected his team to play for the national championship," Ford said. "He had a good bit to do with the national title we won at Clemson."

Though they never reached the mountaintop again, the Tigers continued their winning ways under Ford, who was named ACC coach of the year in both 1981 and 1983. During his 11-year tenure, he led Clemson to five ACC championships, seven top 20 finishes and bowl wins over such "name" schools as Oklahoma, Stanford and Penn State, and his .759 winning percentage at Clemson was an ACC record. Not surprisingly, home attendance rose from 58,000 to 81,000 during Ford's time at Clemson.

Danny Ford came to Bama as a tight end

University of Alabama

"It all goes back to your background," the former Tide player said of his success at Clemson. "I don't live in the state anymore, but a great deal of the success I had as a coach came because of what I learned while at Alabama. Coach Bryant's plan worked in the 1950s and it worked right up through the 1980s and it can still work today. It was just a really good, well-organized plan that he believed in and it was based on out-working people, learning the fundamentals of football, giving maximum effort and making players believe in themselves."

Ford did go through some trying times at Clemson, particularly when the NCAA hit the Tigers football program with sanctions because of rules violations.

"We had to work our way through that, and it was hard to do," Ford said of probation. "We should have never been on probation. But at times like that, you just go back to your experience, tighten everything up, and make a plan to get through it."

After two years away from the game in 1990 and 1991, Ford accepted an advisory position with Arkansas in 1992, lending advice to his good friend and interim head coach at the time, Joe Kines, who now serves as Alabama's defensive coordinator. Ford returned to the sideline again the following season when the Razorbacks tabbed him as their new head coach.

Ford's five-year run at Arkansas, however, was nothing like his glory days at Clemson. Ford did have one breakout season in 1995 when the Razorbacks notched first-ever victories over Alabama, Auburn, Memphis and Mississippi State and won the SEC Western Division.

"When I got to Arkansas, they were behind in the SEC-behind facility-wise and behind player-wise," Ford said. "Alabama really embarrassed us the first time we played them, but then we got a little bit better and competed a little bit better."

And, as Alabama fans would quickly add, Arkansas got a little bit luckier, too. Two controversial plays gave the Razorbacks narrow wins over Alabama in both 1995 and 1997.

"Some people in Alabama still don't believe we won that game," Ford said of the '95 meeting, which was decided by a last-second catch in the end zone that appeared to be a scoop off the ground in replays. "And as far as having 12 players on the field (in '97), it's not like we did that on purpose. The referees could have caught that but just didn't."

So what it was like for him coaching against his alma mater?

"To be on the other sideline opposite Alabama was a different feeling," he said. "I had never been in the visitors' locker room before. All I knew was the home locker room. But it was fun to play them."

Other than that '95 season, though, wins were hard to come by and the public scrutiny and criticism of Ford was intense. After back-to-back 4-7 seasons in 1996 and 1997, Ford was let go by Arkansas.

"I knew I wasn't going to be at Arkansas long, but I can say we left them a good football team, too," said Ford, referring to Arkansas' 9-3 season in 1998.

Occasionally, Ford, who finished with a final coaching record of 122-59-5, wonders how his coaching career might have been different had he remained in Tuscaloosa with Bryant.

"Sometimes I do wish I had stayed there and coached a long time under him, but, at the same time, I'm glad I branched out and was able to coach in other parts of the country," he said. "Plus, if you go back and look at Coach Bryant's history, he did the same thing. He was at different places. And wherever he was, he won.

"The thing about coaching is that you may wear Tennessee orange, Auburn blue, Alabama crimson or Arkansas red, but what all that really is is brick and mortar. The relationships you form with the other coaches and the players, that's what truly matters. Of course, I still pull for Alabama because that's my school and that's my home state."

Ford, who has also fostered a fondness for the state of South Carolina over the years, rarely gets back to Alabama anymore. He still has a sister in Birmingham but the closest he gets to Tuscaloosa, he said, is when traveling from South Carolina to Texas to visit his daughter.

As far as a return to coaching, Ford doubts he'll be back on the sideline again but isn't ruling anything out either.

"I don't think as a coach you ever say you're done," he said. "But, at the same time, let's just say that I'm not waiting around for the phone to ring. College football is still a young man's game. I also don't feel like getting beat up personally again. That happened to me at Arkansas, and that wasn't fun."

So for now, Ford is doing what he does consider fun -taking care of cattle and horses.

"That's mostly what I do these days-just stay around the farm," he said. ■

'BAMA SCORECARD

Notebooking Crimson Tide Sports

Moore Honored

Mal Moore was surprised. "I found out later my secretary (Judy Tanner) had known for two weeks," Moore said. But when he was asked by University President Dr. Robert E. Witt to meet with the Board of Trustees in the recruiting room of what has long been known as "the football building," Moore had no idea what was in store.

"I've been trying to sell the naming rights to the building," Moore said. Instead the Crimson Tide athletics director received a priceless honor.

The Board of Trustees of The University of Alabama recognized Moore for his outstanding achievements and distinguished service to The University by naming a major athletics facility in his honor. The UA facility currently known as the Football Building has been named the Mal M. Moore Athletics Facility as a permanent tribute to Moore's lifetime contributions to The University.

The Board of Trustees passed a resolution commending Moore "whose vision of elevating the athletics facilities at The Capstone to premier status has resulted in a remarkable outcome that is a source of great pride to The University, the State of Alabama and the nation."

The resolution noted that Moore established the Crimson Tradition Fund to secure the financial resources needed to renovate and refurbish existing athletic facilities as well as undertaking the recent expansion of Bryant-Denny Stadium.

"Mal Moore's leadership in building our athletics programs and facilities has been exemplary. This recognition is richly deserved," President Witt said.

Moore's long and distinguished record of service to UA began almost 50 years ago when he joined the Crimson Tide football squad as a scholarshipped player in 1958, a member of Coach Paul Bryant's first recruiting class. A native of Dozier, Moore was a quarterback for Coach Bryant from 1958-1964. He earned a bachelor's degree in sociology in 1963 and a master's in secondary education in 1964.

Moore has the distinction of earning seven national championship rings during his career as a player and coach, the first as a member of the Crimson Tide's 1961 national championship team.

During his coaching tenure, Moore served as Coach Bryant's graduate assistant in 1964, then as defensive backfield coach for five years beginning in 1965 before becoming quarterbacks coach from 1971-1982, and taking on additional responsibility as the Tide's first offensive coordinator in 1975. He is the only individual connected with the Alabama coaching staffs, both past and present, to be a part of seven national championships (1961, 1964, 1965, 1973, 1978, 1979, and 1992).

After coaching stops at Montana State, Notre Dame and the NFL's St. Louis and Phoenix Cardinals, Moore returned to Alabama with Head Coach Gene Stallings in 1990. He was named assistant athletics director in 1993 and associate director for external affairs in 1994. He was named director of athletics on November 23, 1999.

Wooden Nominees

Two University of Alabama basketball players were named preseason candidates for the 2006-07 Wooden Award All-America Team. Both junior point guard Ronald Steele of Birmingham and senior center Jermareo Davidson of Atlanta are among the 50 preseason candidates.

Created in 1976, the John R. Wooden Award is considered the top individual honor in college basketball. Previous winners include Larry Bird (1979), Michael Jordan (1984) and Tim Duncan (1987). In January the Wooden Award committee will release the midseason Top 30, and the national ballot will be released and voted upon in March. The 10-player Wooden Award All-America Team will be announced on March 27, and the winner will be announced on April 7 in a presentation at the Los Angeles Athletic Club.

The inclusion of both Steele and Davidson marks a first for Alabama in having two Wooden candidates. Alabama has had five Wooden Award candidates under Alabama Head Coach Mark Gottfried.

Another Good Article

Ronald Steele, a junior point guard from the University of Alabama, has been selected

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to the Playboy Preseason College All-America Basketball Team. Among past recipients of the honor as collegians are NBA greats Michael Jordan, Larry Bird, Isiah Thomas, Allen Iverson and Shaquille O'Neal.

Playboy selects four guards, four forwards, two centers and a Coach of the Year for its Preseason College All-America Team. Joining Steele among the guards selected are Morris Almond, a senior at Rice, Florida's Taurean Green, and Wisconsin's Alando Tucker. The forwards include LSU's Glen Davis, Nevada's Nick Fazekas, North Carolina's Tyler Hansbrough, and Colorado State's Jason Smith. Florida's Joakim Noah and Ohio State's Greg Oden are the centers and Florida's Billy Donovan the Coach of the Year.

Steele, Noah, Davis and Hansbrough were all among the five Associated Press Preseason All-Americas announced earlier.

The publication also does a Top 25 preseason ranking. Alabama is ranked number 15. The list of award winners and Top 25 teams will be in the December issue of the magazine.

Alabama was ranked 11th in the AP national rankings.

World Finish

Playing among the best amateur golfers in the world, the University of Alabama's Max Alverio finished tied for 39th in the 2006 World Amateur Team Championships.

The 72-hole event had the Netherlands defeating Canada by two shots to win the Eisenhower Trophy. The Netherlands finished 22 under par, posting team round scores of 141-140-136-137/554 on the par 72 course at Stellenbosch Golf Club in Stellenbosch, South Africa. Canada finished second at 20 under par, 556, and the United States, which won the trophy last year, finished third at 19 under par, 557. The Netherlands' Wil Besseling bested the field of 210 individuals with a 13-under par, 275, shooting two under par in the final round which was just good enough to defeat France's Julien Grillon by a stroke (276) to win the individual title. Each team in the field consisted of three individuals. The top two scores from each round counted in the team total for the round.

Alverio, who is a junior on the number one ranked Crimson Tide golf team, was making his third appearance at the WATC, which is held every two years, qualifying in 2002, 2004 and 2006. He shot two under par, 70, in the final round. Alverio, the Puerto Rican Amateur Champion, finished the tournament at even par, posting round scores of 75-71-72-70/288. Puerto Rico finished 36th (152-146-143/153/594).

Alverio has since returned to classes at The University and rejoined his teammates. Bama finished fall play ranked number one in all college golf polls–GolfWeek/Sagarin rankings, the GolfWorld collegiate rankings, the Golf Coaches Association of America/Bridgestone Coaches' poll, and the GolfStat rankings. Alabama won three of its four fall tournaments. Jay Seawell's team had one final event remaining on the fall schedule, the Aloha Purdue Classic in Kauai, Hawai'I, in late November.

October Surprise

Former University of Alabama defensive end and current Chicago Bears rookie Mark Anderson was named the National Football Conference (NFC) Rookie of the Month in October by the National Football League.

The fifth-round selection out of Alabama has made an immediate impact on Chicago's top-ranked defense, leading the team and all rookies with 7.5 sacks, the most sacks through a rookie's first seven games in NFL history.

Anderson, who was featured in the November issue of 'BAMA, recorded 6.0 sacks in October, the most by a rookie and tied for second overall in the NFL. He posted a sack in all four games during the month, including multiple-

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sack contests against Seattle (October 1) and Buffalo (October 8), as the Bears won all four games to improve to 7-0 on the season.

Anderson forced three fumbles, including one against Arizona on Monday Night Football (October 16) that led directly to a defensive touchdown, and had a forced fumble in each of the final three games of the month.

For October, Anderson totaled 16 tackles as the Chicago defense allowed an NFL-low 923 total net yards (230.8 yards per game) and was third with 46 points allowed (11.5 points per game). The Tulsa, Oklahoma, native is currently on pace to set a new rookie record for sacks, now held by Jevon Kearse, who had 14.5 sacks in 1999.

Anderson was the first Bears defensive player to earn a Rookie of the Month Award since Brian Uralcher in October of 2000. New Orleans Saints wide receiver Marques Colston was the American Football Conference (AFC) Rookie of the Month.

Cross Country Success

Making "Nationals" as athletes call making the NCAA Championship events, is a worthy achievement. This year the Alabama men's cross country team qualified for the event. The women's team didn't make it, but one Crimson Tide women's team runner did qualify.

The Tide men's second place finish at the NCAA south regional automatically qualified Bama for a spot at the championship race. Alabama, ranked 13th in the nation, finished in second place, 12 points ahead of number 10 Florida and 21 points behind number 17 Florida State. The regional meet was held at Lambert Acres Golf Course in Maryville, Tennessee.

"I am really pleased with the effort from the guys," Alabama Cross Country Coach Joe Walker said. "We needed a top two finish to insure spot in the national championship race. We did not want to leave anything to chance as far as an at-large bid."

Alabama was led by three young performers. Sophomore Augustus Maiyo finished in third place, just 15 seconds behind the leader with a time of 31:02.9 over the 10k course. Sophomore Abraham Kutingala turned in time of 31:02.9, good for a sixth place finish and freshman Emmanuel Bor finished 15th with a time of 31:46.5. All three earned All-Regional for honors with their performances. The trio was also named All-Southeastern Conference this year. Maiyo and Kutingala were selected to last years All-Region team as well.

On the women's side, Alabama senior Julia Hicks finished in ninth place with a time of 21:34.3, earning the Ontario native a spot in the NCAA national championship race.

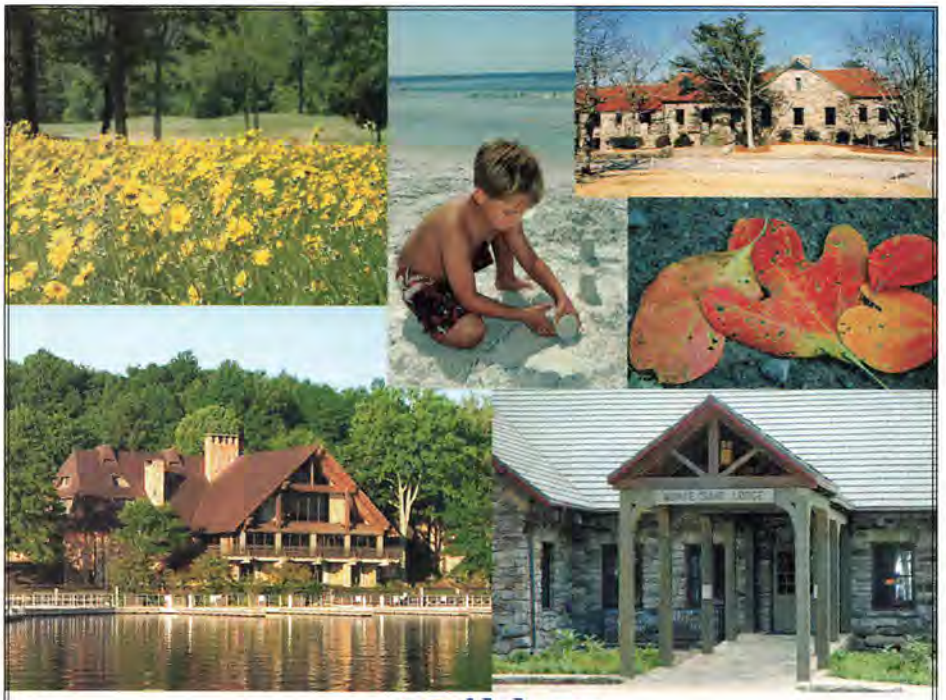
"To make the national championship race was a major goal that I have had all year," Hicks said. "I was able to hang in the pack with the leaders today and run a solid race."

The top four individual finishers in each regional whose team did not make the national championship field received an automatic bid to the championship race. Hicks' ninth place finish earned her one of those four spots.

"This is an amazing accomplishment" Coach Randy Hasenbank said. "Its not an easy task to make the national championship race. Julia ran great, she was really patient from the start and was able to stay with the leaders."

With her ninth place finish, Hicks also earned a spot on the All-Regional team for the second consecutive year. Hicks was the top finisher for Bama in the last 13 races, dating back to the 2004 regional.

The cross country national championship was to be held at Terre Haute, Indiana on November, 20 ■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2006-07 Alabama Winter Sports Schedules

Men's Basketball

Date	Opponent	*Time
Oct. 30	Crimson-White	7:00
Nov. 4	Montevallo (Exh.)	TBA
Nov. 10	Jackson State	7:30
Nov. 17-20	Paradise Jam @ St. Thomas (MTSU, Charleston, Iowa, Toledo, Villanova, VCU, Xavier)	
Nov. 25	Texas Southern	6:00
Nov. 28	Louisiana-Monroe	7:00
Dec. 2	Tennessee State	2:30
Dec. 7	@ Notre Dame	8:00
Dec. 9	Alabama State	6:00
Dec. 16	Southern Miss @ Mobile	6:00
Dec. 20	@ NC State	5:30
Dec. 23	Coppin State	2:00
Dec. 29	Lipscomb	7:00
Jan. 1	Oklahoma	1:30
Jan. 6	@ Arkansas	1:00
Jan. 10	LSU	7:00
Jan. 17	@ Vanderbilt	7:00
Jan. 20	Georgia	12:30
Jan. 23	@ Auburn	8:00
Jan. 27	Arkansas	2:00
Jan. 31	@ LSU	8:00
Feb. 3	South Carolina	2:00
Feb. 7	Mississippi State	7:00
Feb. 10	@ Ole Miss	4:00
Feb. 14	@ Florida	7:00
Feb. 17	Kentucky	2:00
Feb. 21	@ Tennessee	7:00
Feb. 24	Auburn	4:00
Feb. 28	Ole Miss	7:00
March 4	@ Mississippi State	1:00
March 8-11	SEC Tournament @ Georgia Dome, Atlanta	

Women's Basketball

Date	Opponent
Oct. 31	West Alabama (Exh.)
Nov. 6	Delta State (Exh.)
Nov. 10	Samford
Nov. 13	@ Arkansas State
Nov. 17	Tennessee Tech
Nov. 19	SE Louisiana
Nov. 24-25	St. Mary's Inv. @ San Francisco (St. Mary's, Cal State-Northridge, Missouri)
Nov. 29	UT-Chattanoga
Dec. 2	Savannah State
Dec. 4	McNeese State
Dec. 9	@ Tulane
Dec. 16	@ Louisiana Tech
Dec. 18	Birmingham Southern
Dec. 20	Belmont
Dec. 28	South Dakota State
Dec. 30	North Dakota State
Jan. 3	@ Tennessee
Jan. 7	Auburn
Jan. 11	Kentucky
Jan. 14	@ South Carolina
Jan. 18	@ Arkansas
Jan. 21	LSU
Jan. 28	Tennessee
Feb. 1	@ Auburn
Feb. 4	@ Vanderbilt
Feb. 8	Georgia
Feb. 11	@ Ole Miss
Feb. 18	Florida
Feb. 22	Mississippi State
Feb. 25	@ LSU

Smimming & Diving

Date	Opponent
Oct. 13	Intrasquad Meet
Oct. 14	Alumni Meet
Oct. 20-21	Dallas (Texas) Morning News Meet
Oct. 20	Delta State
Nov. 10	LSU/Arkansas (W) @ Baton Rouge
Nov. 17	Auburn
Nov. 30-Dec. 3	US Open @ Purdue
Jan. 13	@ Kentucky
Jan. 20	Florida/South Carolina
Feb. 2-4	SEC Diving Championships @ Lexington
Feb. 7-10	SEC Swimming Championships @ Lexington
Feb. 17	Last Chance (W) @ Athens
Feb. 24	Last Chance (M) @ Auburn
March 2-4	NCAA Zone Diving
March 8-10	NCAA Women's Championships @ Minneapolis
March 15-17	NCAA Men's Championships @ Minneapolis
March 26-April 1	USA Swimming Nationals @ Garden City, N.Y.

Gymnastics

Date	Opponent	*Time
Jan. 12	Oklahoma	7:30
Jan. 19	@ Florida	7:00
Jan. 26	Auburn	7:30
Feb. 2	Kentucky	7:30
Feb. 10	@ Georgia	4:00
Feb. 16	@ Arkansas	7:00
Feb. 23	North Carolina	7:30
March 2	LSU	7:30
March 9	UCLA	7:30
March 16	@ Auburn	7:00
March 31	SEC Championships @ Fayetteville	
April 14	NCAA Regionals @ Tuscaloosa	
Aprill 26	NCAA Championships @ Salt Lake City, Utah	

Track & Field

Jan. 12-13	@ Kentucky Invitational	Feb. 9-10	@ Iowa State Invitational
Jan. 19-20	@ Clemson Invitational (W)	Feb. 23-25	SEC Championships at Lexington
Jan. 19-20	@ Indiana Classic (M)	March 2-3	Last Chance @ Notre Dame
Feb. 2-3	Armorny Invitational @ New York (W)	March 9-10	NCAA Championships @ Fayetteville
Feb. 2-3	@ Notre Dame Invitational (M)	*Central time	

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ALABAMA CRIMSON TIDE

2006–2007 HOME BASKETBALL SCHEDULE

Date	Opponent	Location	Time
10/30/2006	Crimson/White Game	Tuscaloosa, AL	7:00 p.m.
11/4/2006	Montevallo (Exhibition)	Tuscaloosa, AL	5:00 p.m.
11/10/2006	Jackson State	Tuscaloosa, AL	7:30 p.m.
11/25/2006	Texas-Southern	Tuscaloosa, AL	6:00 p.m.
11/28/2006	Louisiana Monroe	Tuscaloosa, AL	7:00 p.m.
12/2/2006	Tennessee State	Tuscaloosa, AL	2:30 p.m.
12/9/2006	Alabama State	Tuscaloosa, AL	6:00 p.m.
12/23/2006	Coppin State	Tuscaloosa, AL	2:00 p.m.
12/29/2006	Lipscomb University	Tuscaloosa, AL	7:00 p.m.
1/1/2007	Oklahoma	Tuscaloosa, AL	1:30 p.m.
1/9/2007	LSU	Tuscaloosa, AL	8:00 p.m.
1/20/2007	Georgia	Tuscaloosa, AL	12:30 p.m.
1/27/2007	Arkansas	Tuscaloosa, AL	2:00 p.m.
2/3/2007	South Carolina	Tuscaloosa, AL	2:00 p.m.
2/7/2007	Mississippi State	Tuscaloosa, AL	7:00 p.m.
2/17/2007	Kentucky	Tuscaloosa, AL	2:00 p.m.
2/24/2007	Auburn	Tuscaloosa, AL	4:00 p.m.
2/28/2007	Ole Miss	Tuscaloosa, AL	7:00 p.m.

Dates and times are subject to change, please check your local listings
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